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The 250th Anniversary of the
Reformed (Dutch)
Church of Gravesend



MARCH NINETEENTH
AND TWENTY - FIRST
Nineteen Hundred and Five





REV. P. V. VAN BUSKIRK

1655

1905

The 250th Anniversary

of the

Gravesend, N. Y.

Reformed (Dutch) Church

of Gravesend

March 19th and 21st, 1905



Pastor

P. V. VAN BUSKIRK

Elders

A. A. EMMENS
CHAS. M. RYDER
ELIAS H. RYDER
AUGUSTUS F. FRIEND



Deacons

CHAS. R. STILLWELL
JOHN S. RYDER
CORNELIUS STRYKER
STEPHEN C. PETTIT, M.D.

Organist

E. VAN SICKLEN

Treasurer

E. W. VOORHIES

Committee on Printing

JOHN S. RYDER

CORNELIUS STRYKER

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SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 10:30 A. M.

PRELUDE (Organ and Violin)—“Love’s Greeting” *Edgar*

Mr. Alfred M. Voorhies, Violin.

2 ANTHEM—“Bonus Est” *Brackett*

3 INVOCATION AND SALUTATION.

(*The Pastor*) “Let us invoke the Divine Presence and blessing. Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we come to bless Thee this morning, that Thou hast revealed Thyself to us in such blessed manner. We come to bless Thee for the great purpose of redemption which Thou hast given to the world, that all might be saved. Grant us now that the hearing and understanding of Thy Word to-day may lead us to a fuller service, giving us an uplifting in the Christian life that will give us peace and ultimate joy in Thy presence when our work is done. And we will give the praise to Thee, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, world without end—
Amen.”

4 RESPONSE (Choir)

5 READING OF THE LAW

“God spake all these words, saying: ‘I am the Lord, Thy God.’”

6 GLORIA

7 FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON

The Eighty-fourth Psalm.

8 DUET (Soprano and Alto)—“The Invisible Land” *Leslie*

Misses Alida Storm and Alice Strong.

9 SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON.....

Part of the Second Chapter of the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians.

10 HYMN (924)—“O, God, Our Help”.....

11 PRAYER

O, Thou great and eternal God and our Heavenly Father, who girdest Thyself with light as with a garment and makest the heavens the place for manifesting forth Thy glory. Thou art the King eternal, immortal, invisible, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto and whom no man hath seen, or can see.

We come adoring Thy majesty, rejoicing in Thy sovereignty and praising Thee for that inexpressible revelation of Thyself unto us in the person of Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, this morning. The heavens are Thine, the earth also is Thine, and we are Thine both by creation and by purchase.

We come to adore Thee this morning, therefore, as our Creator, our Preserver and our bountiful Benefactor. In Thy house we come to pay our vows, before Thee we come confessing our sins, and from Thy blessed hand we expect the divine blessing of pardon. O, Thou God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom alone we can approach Thee aright, and in whose name alone we can hope for acceptance, we give Thee humble and hearty thanks for the gift of Thine only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried and ascended. We bless Thee for His advent that opened up a way unto the heavenly, for His death that brought life to the world, and for His high priestly intercession, all availing in the right hand of His heavenly Father. With this supreme assurance we come to offer Thee our praise and our prayers this morning. In all our approaches to Thee may we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him. May we know that He hath borne our grief and carried our sorrow, and be able to rejoice in Him as our sympathizing friend, our almighty helper and our lovely example. May we drink into His Spirit. May we transcribe the excellencies of His character into our own. May we place our feet in the very prints of his steps and follow Him in the regeneration till we shall be perfectly like Him and see Him as He is.

Create within us, O God, a knowledge of Thy will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding that we may approve things that are excellent, and be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.

Many eyes are upon us; lead us in a plain path, for Thy name's sake! Many watch for our halting, but may we put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and constrain them by our good works which they behold to glorify God in the day of visitation. We bless Thee, O God, for our wilderness privileges, for the manna, the streams of the smitten rock, the fiery, cloudy pillar, the tabernacle and the ark. But when all these shall have passed away and been left behind us, may we be invited into that sanctuary eternal, to serve Thee till time shall be no more. We bring Thee our thanks to-day for what our eyes behold and for what a quickened memory brings back to us.

O Thou, God of our fathers, be Thou our God for all the days, we beseech Thee. We come to bless Thee this morning that thine eyes have been upon this ancient Church from the beginning until now. For the fathers who laid her foundations away back in the seventeenth century we give Thee humble and hearty thanks. For the faith and the prayers that prevailed and triumphed when the war-clouds hung dark and heavy upon the horizon, we bring our praises to Thee to-day. For the souls that have been born in her, who have waited upon Thine ordinances in this place, who have spent their time and means to erect this altar and have consecrated it with many prayers and many tears, we give Thee humble and hearty thanks.

We bless Thee for a faithful ministry in this pulpit who have never failed to declare the whole counsel of God, whether men would hear, or whether they would forbear, and who have laid themselves upon the altar for the gospel's sake. For that triumphant faith that they possessed and that hath enabled them to pass through those gates of gold and who are now verily present before God in the kingdom of heaven, we give Thee profound and hearty thanks. And now, O Lord, to Thee we commit the interests of this beloved Zion which our fathers planted and fostered.

To Thee, O our Father, we dedicate our lives and our persons this day for fuller service and larger service.

In grateful acknowledgment of Thy fatherly goodness and mercy we turn our thoughts to Thee, O God, this supreme moment of this Church's life.

And now may the God of Peace that brought again from the

dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

12 HYMN (559)—“I Love Thy Kingdom”.....

13 HISTORICAL SERMON

(*The Pastor*) Before I begin this sermon I want to acknowledge my indebtedness to several authors from whom I have gathered the matter, and more especially from the wisdom and the research of the Hon. William H. Stillwell, who was a townsman of yours in those earlier days of your history and life. And there are other historical works to which reference has been made, which I shall not be able to recount in the manuscript—but you will know what is mine and what is theirs. The words to which I will invite your attention, you will find recorded in the Fourth Chapter, according to St. Mark, and 28th verse, and in the last clause: “First, the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.”

The Church of God in the world is a growth and development. Instituted under the most adverse conditions, growing under the most pronounced opposition, coming to the zenith of its glory to-day, and destined to a supremacy, universal, that shall even put the glory of to-day in the shade beyond a peradventure. It began with one man as a starting point; it shall never cease to be the greatest organization under the firmament, till all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues shall be embraced in that transcendent spectacle of uttering that great hallelujah chorus before the great white throne.

All churches sprang from feeble beginnings. No church sprang full-fledged into being upon the footstool, ever. From the time that Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees to become the great head of the Church of God in the wilderness of Canaan, till to-day, the great sacramental hosts are numbered by the millions, under many names and in many climes, the Church of God in the world has been the most elaborate fulfilment that this world has ever seen, of our text this morning, “First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.”

The story of this Church’s existence and life is the story of a

rise from small beginnings, but the two hundred and fifty years of her life which we celebrate to-day, is something to be proud of, and hence the gatherings that we contemplate in honor of this existence, cannot but stir the blood of every one of us and move us to thanksgiving to Almighty God for such a heritage and possession.

The beginning of this Church's existence is almost co-existent with the history of the existence of this town, and hence, a resumé of the circumstances and events that led up to the early settlement of this town of Gravesend, may not be out of place just here.

Conceive, if you can, of a trackless waste, of uninhabited territory (except by the red man), with here and there a primitive dwelling of an occasional white settler, perhaps—with no school, no church, no friendly neighbors, even, to go to in time of need, except at wide distances. An agricultural folk, what there were of them; primitive in dress, limited in knowledge, limited in means—and you have a faint resemblance of the reality that existed here where we sit to-day, just prior to 1645, when Lady Deborah Moody first appeared upon the scene.

The Church of which you and I are proud to-day, if not born in her house, was born in close proximity to it, was "the Church in the wilderness" of which Megapolensis wrote ten years later, when he said, under date of March 18, 1655: "We have cause to be grateful to the Lords, Directors, and to your reverences, for the care and trouble taken to procure for the Dutch on Long Island a good clergyman, even though it has not yet resulted in anything. Meanwhile, God has led Dominie Johannes Polhemus from Brazil over the Caribbean Islands, to this place. He has for the present gone to Long Island to a village called 'Midwout,' which is somewhat the Meditullium of the other villages, to wit: Breucklyn, Amersfort and Gravesend." This was the beginning of this ancient Church, the first beginnings of the gospel of Christ in this region, the first appearance of the Church of God here, "in the blade." From that distant, far-off day till this moment, we have the Church "in the ear." And the great future spanning between to-day and the great day when the earth shall become flame and the elements melt with the fervent heat, is to constitute that great scene hinted at and prefigured by this description of Jesus Christ, "the full corn in the ear."

Gravesend was not a Dutch settlement, and this accounts for the uncertainty when this Church's organization in this community was effected. Without entering into the controversy as to the origin of the name of the town, with Deborah Moody as a starting-point,

we have an English woman settling here to become the real beginning of this town's actual existence. Gravesend was English in name, English in its first settlers and its early government, and all the traditions handed down to us, helping us in the solution of this problem, point back to our earliest existence as an existence under the Crown, with Lady Deborah Moody as the moving spirit in its creation and administration. She came to this country from England, for religion's sake, as did many another adventurer, who came to rugged New England and settled first in Salem, in Massachusetts, either early in 1640, or before it, for her name is found among the members of the Congregational Church, at Salem, in April, 1640. Here she lived, bought a farm, stocked it with cattle, and put it under cultivation. Becoming a convert to the views of Roger Williams, which had overspread New England, she began to give expression of her dissent from the views of the Congregational Church, concerning infant baptism, and three years after joining the Church of Salem we find she was admonished by the Church, then excommunicated from the communion of the Church among whom she had cast her lot.

This visitation of the wrath of the Church of Salem upon her head paved the way for her coming to New Amsterdam to seek a more congenial home among the Dutch. Here we find her in 1643, where she met Nicholas Stillwell, a tobacco planter, who had recently been driven from his farm by the Indians, and had taken refuge within the fort, until the redskins had ceased their depredations. These English-speaking people, naturally enough, not feeling quite at home where only the Dutch was spoken, began to cast about for a new settlement where they could be in the full use of their religious liberty, which they so dearly loved, and still be safe from the attacks of the Indians. The Dutch Government gladly seconded this proposition, and invited them to select from the unappropriated lands of the West India Company, whose agents the Government was, and accordingly, we find a committee was appointed to select a site in what is now the Village of Gravesend, near the spot in which we are here convened. Gravesend was thus begun.

The first patent for land was issued for 100 morgen, or 200 acres, over against Conyene (Coney) Island. It bears date of August 1st, 1639, and was confirmed in 1643. The patent to Lady Moody from Governor Kieft, is dated December 19th, 1645. It gives and grants to "Ye Honorable Lady Deborah Moody, Sir

Henry Moody, Baronet, Ensign George Baxter and Sergeant James Hubbard, and any that shall join in association with them, a tract bounded on the creek adjacent to Coneyne Island, with the power to erect a town and fortifications, and to have and enjoy the free liberty of conscience, according to the customs and manners of Holland, without molestation or disturbance from any magistrate or magistrates, or any other ecclesiastical minister that may pretend jurisdiction over them, and the liberty to constitute themselves a body politic, as freemen of the province and Town of Gravesend."

Armed with this document, Lady Moody made haste to proceed to her newly acquired possessions, and began the laying out of the town. Here she built a house for herself, not far from the spot in which we are now sitting, offered asylum to any who came unto her in the name of religion, was honored and beloved by all who knew her, and passed away and was buried, by 1659, at least, and her dust lies in the old graveyard, not far away from this spot where we are worshipping to-day, awaiting the trumpet call of the Angel of the Resurrection.

All the earliest environments of Gravesend being distinctly English, Lady Deborah Moody herself being an Englishwoman, and being the one great rallying center unto which all the English-speaking people flocked and congregated as most congenial because of the mother tongue that was here spoken, it was only natural that some other religious creed should have obtained here, instead of the Dutch Reformed Church, which was the Church of Holland and not of England. Accordingly, the first religious sect that appeared in this locality, pervaded with religious impulses, whose history has come down to us, were Quakers, and the earliest Christian service held in this community, were of that distinctive type and order, and Lady Moody, herself, though not in entire sympathy, perhaps, with all their tenets, adopted that form of religious belief, and fellowship, for want of a better one.

That the Quakers were not popular with the Colonial Governor, Peter Stuyvesant, is evident from the following incident: Robert Hodgson, who preached here in Gravesend in 1657, was arrested for holding service in this community, against the order of the Governor-General, Stuyvesant, along with two women who had entertained him at their home. Stuyvesant at once ordered the prisoners sent to New Amsterdam, where he gave the women a piece of his mind in no uncertain language, and then released them, but Hodgson was made to feel the wrath of the old Dutch Governor.

He was sentenced to two years' imprisonment at hard labor, or to pay a fine of six hundred guilders. Such a fine was beyond his power to liquidate, and accordingly he was compelled to bear the other alternative. Chained to a wheelbarrow, he was ordered to work, but refused, and was thereupon lashed by a negro until he fainted. He remained in prison for some months, was scourged repeatedly into insensibility, and was cruelly dealt with in many ways till, from sheer pity on the part of the Governor's sister, at his awful condition, he was prevailed upon to release him under a new sentence of banishment from the province.

But all the inhabitants of Gravesend were not Quakers, for in 1655, two years before Robert Hodgson appeared in Gravesend, Reverend John Megapolensis, of New Amsterdam, under date of March 18th of that year, wrote to the Classis of Amsterdam, as follows: "God has led Dominie Johannes Polhemus from Brazil over the Caribbean Islands to this place. He has for the present gone to Long Island to a village called Midwout, which is somewhat the Meditullium of the other villages, to wit: Breuckelen, Amersfort and Gravesend. There he has preached for the accommodation of the inhabitants on Sundays during the winter season." That was in 1655, and under date of January 13th, 1657, in the petition of the magistrates of Amersfort, praying confirmation of an assessment for the minister's salary, said petition goes on to state that: "In order to raise the three hundred florins in the easiest way (needed to make up their quota of said amount) we have assessed the property of each person, conscientiously and to the best of our knowledge, here below given in detail, which, with what some parties from Gravesend have voluntarily offered to contribute, will make up a sum of three hundred florins."

From all of which it appears that a Dutch Dominie was rendering a Dutch service for the benefit of a Dutch contingent, somewhere even at this early date, or Gravesend would not have made a contribution for the support of a minister settled over at the Churches of Midwout and Amersfort. In 1660 a formal petition was drawn up and sent to the Director-General and Council of New Amsterdam by the inhabitants of Gravesend, asking for the appointment of a preacher or pastor to be sent here, that then the glory of God may be spread, the ignorant taught, the simple and innocent strengthened, and the licentious restrained. Then we shall be able to live in greater peace and in the fear of the Lord, under your Honor's wise administration and government. Whereupon relying

we await your Honor's favorable reply, and so doing, etc." Signed by ten names, including the name of Lieutenant Nicholas Stillwell.

Nothing, however, came of the petition, and in 1664 the country passed into the hands of the English. Under a new regime, new laws were enacted and the governmental policy of England was substituted for that which prevailed under the Dutch government, and the first building used for court purposes and afterwards used for Church services as well, was erected in Gravesend and was known as the "Sessions House." This "Sessions House," or Court House, was erected at the expense of Kings County, with Newtown and Staten Island, and Gravesend had the honor bestowed upon it of becoming the County seat, virtually, of Kings County, from 1667 to 1685, when a law was passed removing the County seat to Flatbush. The location of the Sessions House was on a lot set apart for the purpose, on the southeast corner of the northwesterly village square, forty-eight feet east and west, and forty-three feet on the northerly and southerly sides or boundaries. The conditions and obligations contained in its erection were as follows: The town was to furnish the land on which the building was to be built, free of cost; it covenanted to keep the building in repair for twenty-one years, barring casualties, and they were to have the use of the building for Church or town purposes, as occasion might require. This building was completed in 1667, and thus became the first Church edifice in which religious services were held in the town of Gravesend.

Dominie Polhemus had been the pastor at Flatbush and Flatlands now since 1655, and continued to remain so till 1676. Whether he ever officiated in the Sessions House, at Gravesend, we do not know, but we do know that Gravesend journeyed to Brooklyn, occasionally, perhaps to Flatbush and Flatlands as well, to hear the Word of God in those days, for Dominie Hendrick Selyns says: "We do not preach in a Church but in a barn." (Korenscheur.) Next winter we shall, by God's favor, and the general assistance of the people, erect a Church. The audience is passably large, coming from Midwout, New Amersfort, and often Gravesend, increases it.

In 1685 the Sessions House was removed from Gravesend to Flatbush, and the old Sessions House, and the lot on which it had stood in Gravesend, was afterwards sold to a number of the residents of the town, as subsequent deeds of individuals' "rights in the meeting house and grounds" show. The interval spanned between the years 1685 and 1705 seems involved in obscurity in the history of

the Church. No records have come down to us which are authoritative and reliable, of a distinct and separate organization, as yet. We grope our way in the dark, in search of any separate ecclesiastical exercise, till a few years later. Suffice it to say that probably the services of Dominies Selyns, Van Zureen, Varick and Lapardus, as occasional supplies who came over from Flatbush and Flatlands, as occasion permitted, filled in the time from 1685 to 1705, when Dominie Bernadus Freeman enters upon the scene.

With the death of Wilhelmus Lupardus in 1701, all the Churches in Kings County were left without a pastor. In 1705 some of the Consistories of the Churches of Kings County wanted to call Reverend Bernardus Freeman to the pastorate of the Churches, and there were other Consistories who wished to call Reverend Vincentius Antonides to the same position at the same time. Freeman, allowing himself to become the tool of Governor Cornbury, was induced to accept a civil license at his hand, December 26th, 1705, to officiate in the Churches on Long Island, and moved down from Schenectady to become the pastor of these Churches, after he had already declined a call from them. The rest of the Churches, on the other hand, had, through the Classis, secured the services of Vincentius Antonides, from Holland. Both of these ministers accepted, and as each party claimed to represent all the Churches of the County, an acrimonious dispute sprang up, and became so intense that it threatened the very life of the Dutch Churches on Long Island. At length, the bitterness of this ecclesiastical controversy died away, and the parties to the dispute became reconciled to each other, and a kind of peace was patched up, which resulted, happily for the Churches, in an agreement in 1714, on December 27th of that year, between the six associate or Collegiate Churches of Brooklyn, Flatbush, Flatlands, New Utrecht, Bushwick and Jamaica, by which the joint services of both Dominies Freeman and Antonides were secured.

By this cessation of hostilities and the signing of articles of capitulation in the adoption of this agreement between the six Collegiate Churches, Gravesend was to be benefited, as we shall see. In the controversy between Freeman and Antonides, New Utrecht had espoused the side of Bernardus Freeman, and Gravesend seems to have sided with her in that contention, having made some arrangement with that town for some part of the ministerial services of Mr. Freeman, and for which they paid a part of his salary, receipts for which, Dominie Lebagh declared, he had seen in unbroken succession

from May 13th, 1706, to December 25th, 1714. Evidence number one that Gravesend was then at that time an organization. Then the agreement entered into on January 4th, 1715, between John Lake and John Simonson on the one side, and Cornelius Van Brunt and Peter Cortelyou on the other, signing a compact between the Town of New Utrecht and the Town of Gravesend, for the third part of all the ministerial services of Reverends Freeman and Antonides, puts the organization of this ancient Church at that time as a fact beyond a peradventure.

The specifications contained in this agreement were as follows, as recorded in the Kings County Register's Office, and translated from the Dutch: "First, that Gravesend shall have the full third part of the whole of the religious services of the Reverends Freeman and Antonides, which New Utrecht has obtained by agreement between the six associated towns—that is, when New Utrecht has had two turns, then Gravesend shall have a third in that town; and when the Lord's Supper is twice administered in New Utrecht, the third time it shall be administered in Gravesend; and so on for all time in this manner. Second, Gravesend promises to pay a full third part of the salary which New Utrecht had agreed to pay, every half-year, according to the agreement of the six associated towns, beginning with New Years, 1715, and so on yearly, during the whole of the time of the service of said ministers. Further, Gravesend promises to fetch one-third of the firewood required for their use, and which New Utrecht has agreed to fetch, at such times and manner as shall fall to her share. Also to bear the one-third part of New Utrecht's proportion of the cost of repairs to the ministerial residence."

This article of agreement, signed, sealed and delivered, and recorded in the Register's Office of the County, over the signatures of these chosen representatives, together with an official list of Elders and Church members, reaching back to 1714, sweeps away every vestige of doubt as to this Church's organization being clearly established and having the ordinances regularly administered during the pastorate of Bernardus Freeman, reaching from 1705 to 1741, when he was declared emeritus and retired from the service of the ministry.

On the retirement of Mr. Freeman he was succeeded by Reverend Johannes Arondeus, who came from Holland in 1742, and preached in Kings County till 1747. The Reverend Vincentius Antonides died that same year, 1742, and he was succeeded by Reverend

Ulpianus Van Sinderin. The two ministers did not agree very well together. Arondeus was of a contumacious spirit, had frequent quarrels with his colleague; he was charged with drunkenness and other crimes, and finally, in 1750, was suspended from the ministry by the Coetus, but he paid no attention to it. How long Arondeus officiated at Gravesend is not known, but it could not have been long, for in 1745 the Church was ministered unto by Bernadus Ver Bryck, as appears from an entry in the baptismal registry between the dates 1720 and 1745. In 1745, the historian says, the Reverend Arondeus, Pastor of the Churches of Flatbush and Flatlands, and of the Church of Gravesend, withdrew from the arrangement made with New Utrecht, in 1714-15, and without any known cause, cut off the Church and congregation from all religious service whatsoever. There have been many short cuts into the ministry, and not a few of them questionable and of doubtful propriety in the methods and means pursued for attaining unto that end. The sudden termination of the contract made between the Churches of New Utrecht and Gravesend in 1714-15, on the part of Arondeus, left the Church at a loss to know what to do in the premises, and the first step they took in the way of filling up their lack of a minister for their pulpit, was in securing the services of Bernadus Ver Bryck, a schoolmaster, to conduct services for them as a pulpit supply in the interim.

Ver Bryck began the study of Theology with Arondeus when he was Pastor of the Churches of Kings County, without the permission or sanction of either Classis or Synod. He ordained him, and the people of the Town of Gravesend, considering that laying on of hands on the part of Arondeus valid, they engaged him as their Pastor. Ver Bryck preached in Gravesend and baptized children here, as is evident from the old Church records, but removed to North Branch, New Jersey, in 1749, and thus his connection with this Church ceased. Then followed a period of ten or twelve years, fraught with anxiety and concern, second to none in the checkered career of this ecclesiastical organization. The sky had been dark before, but now it assumed an inky blackness. The dissention between Freeman and Antonides augured ill for this weak creation just launched upon its career of preaching Christianity to the people of that early day. Then when Arondeus summarily snapped asunder the bands of the contract between Gravesend and New Utrecht, made in 1715, by refusing to render any further service to this Church without giving any reason for his course pursued, that was a sad blow to the cause of religion in this community. And now, when

scarcely yet recovered from the shock of these two previous attacks upon her prestige and Church life, the removal of Ver Bryck away from the community, and its train of providential circumstances, which could, perhaps, have been neither foreseen nor averted, struck at the very life of this Zion, still wearing only her swaddling clothes, threatening her almost with extinction.

The retirement of Ver Bryck leaving this pulpit vacant, and the decimated ranks of the rank and file of this young sacramental host, by death and other causes, those that were left in it becoming disheartened and ready to give up in despair, jeopardized the very existence of the Church to a degree that made its continuance almost questionable.

The old Sessions House, which had stood since it was built, in 1667, had become dilapidated beyond repair, through age; it was so old that it had to be taken down. The congregation had been weakened so much by death and other causes, that there were not sufficient male members left to fill the offices of Elders and Deacons. Then add to this list, the distractions that were rending the Church at large, on account of the controversy that existed between the Coetus and Conferentia parties (whether ordinations could and should be performed in this country, irrespective of the authority and consent of the old Classis of Amsterdam, which was then sweeping over the Churches). And, in addition to all this, remember the moral effect upon the community at large, of the dissolute and immoral life of Arondeus, who had been charged with drunkenness and other crimes, and suspended from the ministry.

With all this array of discouragements confronting them, we need not be surprised that they had to close the Church, because they could go on no longer.

This was the state of things in this Town and Community from the time that Ver Bryck left, in 1749-50, till 1762, ten or twelve years later, when Reverend Martinus Schoonmaker became a potent factor in the Church's life. In that year this godly and earnest young man visited Gravesend and by hard, personal work and earnest appeals aroused this Gravesend constituency from its lethargy and discouragements. He was a young man full of fire and earnestness. He sought the help and advice of old Dominie Van Sinderin, then living in an adjoining congregation, in his proposed task; and he was greatly helped by him in formulating his plans to be pursued.

In 1760 the old Sessions House was torn down, and in 1762 the people, under the inspiration of young Schoonmaker, and the

help of good Dominie Van Sinderin, were reorganized into the Church of our Reformed order, with twelve male and nine female members, or a total of twenty-one. They immediately took steps toward building a new Church edifice, and this first building constructed distinctively for Church purposes, and the second that had been used for purposes of worship, was built upon the identical spot where the old Sessions House had stood.

No cut or picture of this old tabernacle has been able to be found, but the description of it has descended from father to son, and there is no lack of evidence that we have an authoritative and accurate representation of this ancient Church, preserved unto posterity beyond a peradventure. It stood facing the south, as the old Sessions House had done before it. It was slightly smaller than its predecessor, built in 1667, and was of the style of architecture current for Church buildings in that day. That is to say: It was a low building with a double pitched roof, and having double doors of entrance. It was painted brown, inside and out, with four windows of small panes, of upper and lower sash, on either side. One aisle in the center of the building ran the entire length, in which were two strong pillars, each about fifteen feet from the end, supporting the roof. A gallery for young men ran across the south end, and under this were the quarters reserved for the colored people of the Church. The pulpit, at the north end, was a plain octagon coop, reached by a spiral stairs, and perched upon a pole. The sides of the edifice were shingled, and the inside sealed with boards. The building was surmounted by a spire containing a belfry, and a bell, weighing perhaps eighty pounds, to summon the worshippers on Sabbath morning. And above all stood the orthodox weathercock, so common in the Fatherland, of approved Dutch make and finish. There were no heating appliances, except the current foot-stove, which the housewife brought along with her from her home, and filled with live coals from a neighbor's house in close proximity to the place of worship. As to the minister, it was no uncommon thing for him to go into the country tavern nearest at hand, and take a dram of standard make and purity, along with his parishioners, before going into the pulpit, to keep out the cold and limber up his tongue for the long Dutch sermon which was to follow.

This Church building, unpretentious in appearance and primitive in the extreme, was built from moneys realized from the sale of pews, with the understanding that no tax or assessment should ever be imposed upon the owners, a promise that was faithfully and

sacredly kept. Completed in 1762 this Church edifice, the first that was erected exclusively for religious purposes, was dedicated to the service of God and opened for divine worship on July 25th, 1762, by Dominie Schoonmaker. This must have been while he was yet a student of Theology, for he was not licensed to preach till 1765, and then was a young man only twenty-eight years old.

Soon after this Schoonmaker became the Pastor of the Churches of Harlem and Gravesend, taking up his residence in Harlem and journeying to Gravesend on horseback, as occasion demanded, receiving for his services rendered here thirty-five pounds sterling (one hundred and seventy-five dollars) per year, and preaching at frequent intervals. On August 10th, 1768, Reverend Martinus Schoonmaker bought a farm in Harlem, consisting of twenty-eight acres, on which he resided, and where he made his home. Preaching at Gravesend on alternate Sundays it was his custom to journey to this place on Saturday afternoons, and put up at the house of some parishioner, where he had been invited to stay over Sunday, and on Monday morning return home unless some necessary engagement compelled him to remain over for a longer time.

The hardships attending this pastorate under such untoward conditions, can be more easily imagined than described. An earnest patriot, the unsettled state of the country left him a suspect in the eyes of the British, more than once. Plots to capture him were frustrated more than once only by the alertness and loyalty of his friends. His journeys to Harlem were fraught with dangers on repeated occasions, but still he followed the leadings of Providence and braved the storms which threatened him, and became the one pioneer of the Church in Gravesend in this wilderness of hardships and distress, whose name is a sweet benediction yet to-day, and whose work shall not be soon forgotten. Gravesend never had so much for so little as she had in the life-blood of Martinus Schoonmaker, poured out upon the altar in the heroic effort to stir up her people to a more pronounced religious life, and in preaching the Gospel of Christ under such forbidding conditions, for that mere pittance of thirty-five pounds sterling, or a hundred and seventy-five dollars per year. Schoonmaker, faithful to the trust that God had committed to his hands, patient and unfaltering in this first charge of his early choice, was paving the way to a more honorable and a more lucrative position that was awaiting him though he knew it not.

While he was ministering here, Reverend John Casper Rubel

had succeeded Arondeus as a colleague of Reverend Van Sinderin in the other Reformed Churches of Kings County. Dominie Van Sinderin, by reason of the infirmities of age, resigned in 1784, and his colleague, Rubel, was deposed from the ministry on account of drunkenness and ill treatment of his wife, in May of that same year. Consequently, the Churches of Brooklyn, Flatbush, New Utrecht, Bushwick and Flatlands were again left without a Pastor. On the fifth day of October, 1784, the united Churches of Kings County issued a call to Reverend Mr. Schoonmaker, which, after some delay, he accepted (offering him one hundred and fifty pounds sterling—seven hundred and fifty dollars—salary per year), on the condition and with the understanding that Gravesend be associated with the other Churches, and still remain under his pastoral care, he being unwilling to sever his connection with that Church. This proposition was cheerfully agreed to, and Dominie Schoonmaker immediately took steps towards removing from Harlem to Flatbush.

In 1785, therefore, the collegiate relation between Harlem and Gravesend was dissolved by mutual consent; the Reverend Martinus Schoonmaker resigned his charge and sold his farm in Harlem in order to become the Pastor of the Collegiate Churches of Kings County, and to this collegiate arrangement Gravesend became a party, having services held there every six weeks.

On October 28th, 1787, Reverend Peter Lowe, a licentiate, was called and became the colleague of Dominie Schoonmaker. He was ordained in the Church at New Utrecht on Sunday morning, and installed next day in the Church at Flatbush. He continued Associate Pastor of these Churches with Dominie Schoonmaker, till 1808, when he took more immediate charge of the Churches of Flatbush and Flatlands, while Dominie Schoonmaker confined his ministrations to the others, till the next year, 1809, when Dominie Beattie became Pastor of New Utrecht, and in 1811 John Bassett became Pastor of Bushwick and Gravesend.

After this date Schoonmaker exercised a general superintendence over the Churches of Kings County, preaching on alternate Sundays at Bushwick, on which occasion Bassett preached at Gravesend, in which Church, under this arrangement, there was preaching every alternate Sunday. In this way the Church at Gravesend was ministered unto, until a too great addiction to intoxicants caused his suspension from the ministry in 1824, soon after which he died. With the suspension and death of Dominie Bassett, and the departure from his earthly toils to the rest prepared for the people of God,

of Dominie Schoonmaker, at eighty years of age, both of which events occurred in the year 1824, this Church was again left without a pastor and had to depend upon supplies.

For eight years following the death of this lamented and beloved servant of God (Dominie Schoonmaker), the Church shared in the services of such men as it could obtain from time to time, not the least remarkable among whom was Dominie John Hendricks, a man of quaint and original speech, transparent guilelessness, kindly and genial spirit, and whose amusing views of men and things have made his name a household word and printed him in indellible characters upon the pages of memory of those who knew him. Add to this discouraging feature in this Church's history, the other fact that the old Church building, erected in 1762, was becoming old and dilapidated and almost untenantable through age, and you have the untoward conditions that confronted this people when in 1832, Reverend Isaac P. Labagh was invited to this field to become the Church's Pastor. He was installed on November 7th of that year, and was the first minister who gave his whole time to this charge alone, and was called by the Consistory at an annual compensation of five hundred dollars.

Among the first things this newly-acquired man of God sought to do was to revise the roll of membership of this ancient Zion, and collect together the scantily-kept records of business proceedings and Consistorial action. And, having succeeded in this, he next turned his attention to the erection of a new house of worship, to take the place of the old one.

On the thirtieth day of November, 1832, a meeting of Consistory was called and a committee appointed, consisting of Garret Stryker, Nicholas S. Williamson and Samuel I. Garretson, to take up the matter of the building of a new Church, its estimated cost, the site on which it was to be erected, and so forth; who, after investigation, reported in favor of purchasing additional ground adjoining the old site, on the north and west sides thereof. This the Committee were authorized to do, and were also empowered to erect a new church edifice on the enlarged site. And accordingly they purchased from Cornelius I. Emmons and Maria, his wife, for two hundred and fifty dollars, a tract of land sixty-five feet by one hundred and forty-six feet by one hundred and thirteen feet by one hundred and four feet; thence westerly along the old Church lot, forty-three feet; then southerly forty-eight feet, to the place of beginning. The title to the above was vested in the Elders and Deacons

of the Reformed Dutch Church and Congregation of Gravesend, to have and to hold as joint tenants, and not as tenants in common, subject, nevertheless, and in trust for the sole use and benefit of the Reformed Dutch Church and Congregation of the Town of Gravesend, in the County of Kings aforesaid. Upon this site just acquired and duly recorded, this Committee proceeded at once to erect a new structure. They had three thousand eight hundred and thirty-three dollars in hand for this purpose, and on February 5th, 1833, set forward in real earnest to construct an edifice to meet their needs—forty-five feet front and sixty-two feet deep, to be built by day-work, and with Hendrick Van Dyck as boss carpenter. The master carpenter in charge, fixed the scale of prices to be paid to the workmen, and all the carpenters in the town, who desired, it was agreed should be employed thereon.

This building was completed and dedicated to the service of God on January 5th, 1834, with new pews in the new auditorium, and the old pews from the old Church placed in the basement, which was fitted up for a Sunday School room.

The Reverend Isaac P. Labagh continued his ministrations to this people till 1842, when, on account of erroneous views which he had entertained through association with two new-found friends who were Hebrews, living at Unionville, he was summoned to appear before Classis to answer for his change of views concerning the observance of the Sabbath, and refusing to obey the summons he was suspended from the ministry and the pulpit again became vacant.

Early in the next year, January 22nd, 1843, the Consistory extended a call to the Reverend Abraham I. Labagh (a cousin of the former Pastor) to become the Pastor of this Church, and he accepted. Up to this time no provision had been made for a parsonage, for the former Pastor had lived in his own house. In the advent of Reverend Abraham I. Labagh as the newly-chosen Pastor of this field, the Consistory rented a farm house of John I. Stillwell, in Gravesend Neck, the extreme easterly part of the congregation, as a parsonage, and the Reverend Mr. Labagh moved into it till a desirable site could be secured and a house erected thereon.

The new incumbent having just returned from the charge of the Reformed Church at St. Thomas, in the West Indies, and being ill-prepared to stand the rigors of the northern winters, was compelled to seek a more genial climate until he became accustomed to the change, and the Reverend R. D. Van Kleek, Principal of Erasmus

Hall, in Flatbush, from 1843-1860, officiated here in his absence and in his stead.

A parsonage which had long been a necessity now began to attract the attention of the congregation. On September 21st, 1844, a committee was appointed by the Consistory to choose a site and proceed with the erection of a suitable building thereon. The land was bought of John I. Lake and Ann, his wife, and the building was erected by the carpenters, Lawrence and Jacobus Ryder—plain, unpretentious, but commodious and comfortable, and still stands a monument to the memories of those dear men who constructed it.

In due time Reverend Mr. Labagh moved into it, and made it beautiful within, by the sweetness of the lives of himself and his esteemed wife, and without, by all that the hands of the horticulturist could put upon it. The severity of the long and trying winters, however, lost none of their dreaded features by the passage of years, and it began to tell upon the health of both the good Dominie and his wife, and giving up in despair of becoming acclimated to the northern latitude, in 1859 he resigned. In the same year the Consistory invited Reverend Maurice G. Hansen to the pastorate of this Church, and he accepted.

A young man fresh from the Seminary, at New Brunswick, at which he had just graduated in May of that year, full of fiery earnestness, clear-headed and of deep and earnest piety, he won his way to the hearts of the people, and this pulpit gave no uncertain sound during the whole period of his incumbency. He was a man of the old school type natural to him from his Holland ancestry. He was brought up on the Heidelberg Catechism: he believed every word of that Calvinistic expression of faith, and his catechetical classes and instructions have not yet been lost upon the community. A hard student and profound thinker, a great reader and a writer who has left literature enough behind him to insure his name being preserved and honored by posterity for many years yet to come.

Mr. Hansen continued in this pastorate till 1871, when he resigned, and shortly afterward accepted a call to Cossackie, New York, where he did good service for many years, and only relinquished the work of successful pastorates at Grace Chapel at Flatbush, and Hegeman's Mills, New York, the work to which he had consecrated his life, when failing health and declining years summoned him to stop. The last recorded acts of these twelve years of faithful ministry, are still extant in the fair handwriting of their chief actor. His last baptism of record was: "Richard Davis, the

child of Dr. R. L. Van Kleeck and Ellen S. Lawrence, his wife, on October 21st, 1871." His latest marriage ceremony was that of Cornelius S. Stryker and Elizabeth Lake, on June 13th, 1871. And his last right hand of fellowship extended to welcome new members into the Church, was that which welcomed Ellen Jane Cornell (Mrs. John S. Ryder) and Richard Henry Van Cleef into full communion, June 2nd, 1871. ("Servant of God, well done. Rest from thy loved employ. The battle fought, the victory won; Enter thy Master's joy.")

Mr. Hansen was succeeded on January 1st, 1872, by Reverend Austin P. Stockwell, a graduate of Amherst College and of Union Theological Seminary, with successful pastorates at Pleasant Plains and Millbrook, Dutchess County, New York, from which he came here, where he left many warm friends behind him. His biographer says he was, in an eminent degree, the friend of the poor and the lowly, the downcast and careworn. Modest and unassuming in his deportment, pleasing within the pulpit and out of it, refined, hard-working and painstaking, probably no pastor since Dominie Schoonmaker enjoyed and deserved the full support and confidence of the community greater than he. His pulpit preparation was careful and thorough, his sermons plain, practical and convincing, eminently evangelical, theologically sound from center to circumference, and delivered always with a seriousness of manner that left no doubt in the minds of his hearers that he was the accredited ambassador of the great King. He was a four-square man, standing upon a four-square platform and with a four-square message to deliver, and he delivered it without fear.

It was his privilege and joy to receive many of you who are here present this morning into the full communion of this Church, and has preceded you only a little and is waiting your coming to-day into the great spiritual communion of the Church Triumphant on high. For fifteen years he went in and out among you, sometimes satisfied and sometimes not so well satisfied with the gathered results of his work, and in the fall of 1886, having received an invitation to become a missionary in connection with the Childrens' Aid Society of the City of New York, he resigned this charge to take up that work that seemed to him a call from God for his services.

That feeling of dissatisfaction with results, which comes sooner or later to every conscientious and consecrated Christian minister and servant of God, moved him to write thus feelingly and tenderly to his Consistory: "I have been the pastor of this Church for the

past fifteen years, a very much longer pastorate than the average, even in our staid Reformed Church. During this time we have had many seasons of refreshing and many, we believe, have been hopefully converted. But the feeling has been growing upon me for the past year, that so far as the present generation of those unconverted is concerned, my work among them is done. If a pastorate of fifteen years has failed to bring them to Christ, I could hardly expect one of fifty to do it.”

With this tinge of a feeling of discouragement, not unlike that of Elijah when he lay under the Juniper tree, oppressing him, this Consistory reluctantly listened to his prayer and united with him in an application to the Classis for a dissolution of the pastoral relation.

Concerning the present incumbency and this present pastorate, so fresh in your minds, so well known in your lives, and so utterly unworthy of comparison with the work of those great Boanerges who have all passed away, I may be pardoned if I leave myself out of consideration altogether this morning in this last chapter and last leaf of the chapter concerning the history of this Church's life. If I could close this historical discourse without a single personal allusion to myself I would do it. I have not done much. I have done very little, but what I have done I have done conscientiously and to the best of my ability, according to the light that God has given me. But I do not want any praise for what I have done. If it is worthy of remembrance, it will have it when we have all reached the great white throne.

With this one word, if you will suffer it, I wish you would drop the present incumbent in this pulpit, out of sight, for propriety forbids any further reference to myself. I came to you on January 23rd, 1887, with the great invitation of the Revelation: “Come, the spirit and the bride,” etc., and I have not ceased to make that the high ideal of presentation in my preaching, as I hope to make it still, by the grace of God, till my ministry in this pulpit shall cease.

The Church building which had been the scene of most of the ministry of Reverend Isaac P. Labagh, and the entire ministries of the three succeeding pastors, the congregation began to feel stood in need of removal from its present site, before my advent among you, on account of the rapidly increasing traffic on Sundays on the railroad that ran immediately in front of the property, and because of the noise of the frequent trains with their menace to life and limb, that threatened a large portion of the congregation every Sab-

bath. And in 1892, in the Providence of God, a way was opened for the congregation to change its location for the better, and it gladly availed itself of it. The lot on which the Church stood had become valuable for commercial purposes by the passage of years, and in the fall of the year 1892 the Town Board of the Town of Gravesend purchased the property for public purposes, for fifteen thousand dollars.

The contract of sale was signed on December 22nd, and on January 16th, 1893, the deed was given to the principals in the transaction, we covenanting to give possession to the property on June 16th, 1893, and have all the buildings removed from the premises by that date.

The new site for the new Church was purchased of Mr. J. M. Stillwell, as soon as possible after the sale had been effected, and consisted of three and a half acres on the Neck Road, east of the old location, for which the congregation paid six thousand dollars, and immediately took steps in the direction of rearing a new structure. Bids for the new Church were invited and secured, and the contract for the building was awarded to Messrs. Peter Van Note for the carpenter work, and Mr. Benville Schweimler for the mason work, at a cost of twenty-two thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars—the building to be of washed brick with terra-cotta trimmings. The bids for the new structure were opened on August 4th, 1893, and ground was broken on August 9th, 1893, the Pastor taking out the first shovel of earth at eight o'clock in the morning.

The cornerstone was laid October 8th, 1893, with addresses by Doctors Wells, Brush and Rev. J. S. Gardner, and the completion of the edifice and its dedication for divine worship took place on October 28th, 1894, Reverend Dr. Farrar of the Seventh Avenue Church, Brooklyn, preaching the sermon.

The first service held in the new Church was that of the Executive Committee of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, when it was yet in its unfinished state—June 8th, 1894.

The pews for the new edifice were the gift of the Christian Endeavor Society, and the carpets for the same were the bestowment of the Ladies' Aid Society of the Church and congregation.

Thus fully equipped and handsomely completed, this Church came into the possession of the congregation, a model of excellence and beauty that owes a debt of gratitude to-day to that able and far-sighted and devoted consistory who assumed this great task and carried it on to completion without a jar or a misunderstanding, from foundation to finish.

In the early winter of 1900 the perilous enterprise of selling the old parsonage and erecting a new one on the newly-acquired land on which the new Church stood, began to assume a tangible form in this community. It had long been felt that the distance that spanned between the parsonage and the Church was something that might and ought to be remedied; and a desire to concentrate the Church properties began to appeal to the wisdom of the friends of the Church. And on December 29th, 1900, the agreement was signed and the first payment made, on the sale of this piece of real estate which had been in the possession of the Church since 1844, for the lump sum of nine thousand dollars. An order from the Court authorizing the sale, was obtained in due time, and four thousand dollars was applied to wiping out the balance of a mortgage of twelve thousand dollars which had been put upon the new Church; and five thousand dollars was left at the disposal of the Consistory to be reinvested and applied in a new parsonage adjoining the Church. On May 13th, 1901, bids for the new parsonage were opened, and the contract awarded to Bennett and Ryder, two young men in this old Church organization, for the sum of four thousand five hundred and fifty dollars, the building to be completed by August 25th, 1901, under a penalty of ten dollars per day for every day that passed beyond that date, in case of failure.

The contract was faithfully carried out, and in due time the house was completed and the present incumbent had the high honor accorded him of becoming the first occupant of the handsome property.

Nineteen hundred and five, the anniversary of the two hundred and fifty years of existence of this ancient Church, finds it in the possession of a handsome Church edifice and a comfortable, up-to-date parsonage, and the whole property unincumbered and free of debt and with money in the treasury. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us but unto Thy name be the glory. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head over all."

To-day I conclude the eighteenth year of this pastorate. I thank you all for the help and the prayers you have extended to me in this pastoral relation, and for your financial aid in all the events when your help was needed and solicited.

For the peace that was perched upon our banners in those trying

days when building a new sanctuary confronted us I will not be forgetful this morning.

For the unanimity of sentiment that continued throughout that day that made that work lighter and pleasanter, I will not forget to give thanks this morning. The master builders in that magnificent enterprise have some of them passed away, but some of them remain till this day. I want to lay this small tribute of thanksgiving upon the graves of those departed this morning for those noble lives, for their prayers and their labors and sacrifices so invaluable to this congregation. And to those who had the honor accorded them of planting this Church of God in such lovely situation, my prayer is that they may all live long and happily under these temple walls, till the great angel of the Resurrection shall throw open the great gates of the City of Gold, and of God, to their occupation, forever and ever.

14 PRAYER—The Pastor

“O God, Thou art the God of our fathers and Thou art our God, and we praise Thee. We give Thee hearty thanks at this moment for all Thy watchful care. We come to thank Thee for the lives of those who have lived and passed away and entered into the glory that is to follow. May we be able to live the life of Christ as they lived it. Grant that Thy blessing may rest upon this ancient Church; grant us the spirit of prayer and of consecration. May the presence of the Holy Spirit come upon each one of us as we celebrate this momentous event in the history of this Church, and we will conclude our prayer saying, as Thou hast taught us, ‘Our Father.’”

15 ANNOUNCEMENTS

16 OFFERING—(Organ and Violin)—“Angel’s Voice”...*Kron*

17 HYMN (557)—“Glorious Things”

18 DOXOLOGY

19 BENEDICTION

20 POSTLUDE—(Organ)—Festival March*Vincent*

SUNDAY, MARCH 19TH, 7:30 O'CLOCK.

- 1 PRELUDE—(Organ and Violin)—Prayer and Aria from
"Der Freischuetz" *Weber*
Mr. Alfred M. Voorhees, Violin.

- 2 O, BE JOYFUL *Fairbanks*

- 3 CREED

- 4 FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON.....

The 24th Psalm: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, the world and them that dwell therein."

- 5 CONTRALTO SOLO—"Zion"
Miss Louise Klencke.

- 6 SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON

From a part of the Seventh Chapter of Revelation, beginning at the ninth verse.

- 7 HYMN (205)—"All Hail the Power".....

- 8 PRAYER—The Pastor

"Let us unite in prayer: O, Thou great and eternal God who art our Heavenly Father, we bless Thee for the revelation of Thyself to us in such blessed character in Thy Word, and especially in Thy Son, Jesus Christ, through whom Thou hast bestowed unto us redemption.

We come to Thee this night, our Father, to return Thee thanks for this open way that Thou hast opened up for us, and that Thou hast marked out this way for us. We thank Thee for all the

gifts of Thy Providence which Thou hast granted to us in this world. We thank Thee that the labor of the past has brought all these graces unto us. We come with our tribute of praise and of gratitude for this house given to us through those labors. We thank Thee that Thou hast made us to come and join forces with Jesus Christ. We come to ask Thee that the spirit of Christ may come to us in our lives, and we pray Thee that Thou wilt bless us in these exercises as we progress through them during this week, that we may be able to spread abroad Thy truth and that peace which passeth knowledge.

We come to rejoice in the kindness and in the grace of God in which we stand tonight. We thank Thee for this Sanctuary. We thank Thee for all that have attained in the days of the past, unto a consecrated memory by its precious ordinances. We thank Thee to-night that we may come to know that Thou art the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and we come to invoke now, that divine blessing to rest upon the exercises in the midst of which we are engaged to-night, and upon all the exercises upon which we have engaged to-day, and upon all the exercises in which we shall engage in the days that are to come. And wilt Thou grant Thy grace to us that we may be drawn to the Christ? Oh, that we may be able to invite the Christ here and now in our heart of hearts as we worship Thee to-night, our Father; we would worship Thee in spirit and in truth. We come to worship Thee, O Thou Holy Spirit of God. We pray that Thou wilt show the things of Christ to us to-night, through our dark understanding, that Thy glory may be enhanced.

And now grant Thy blessing, we pray Thee, to rest upon us while we are here. Bless Thy servant, who comes to us with a message. May it be productive of good in our lives. We pray Thee that Thy blessing may rest upon all the exercises in which we have engaged to-day, and may it be a day that will long be remembered by us, and be for the advancement and the uplifting of the Church of God in the hearts and in the lives of men. Hear us in our prayer. Lead us and guide us through all the journey of our lives, and save us at last, unto that great salvation which Thou will enable us to share in and secure through Jesus, Thy dear Son, even that resurrection glory, forevermore. And to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit will we give the praise of our redemption, forever.....*Amen*

9 OFFERTORY—(Organ and Violin)—“Chant sans Pa-
roles”*Tschaikowsky*

10	HYMN (601)—“Arise, O King”
11	ADDRESS

Henry Whittemore.

GRAVESEND THE “CITY OF REFUGE” FOR THE OPPRESSED AND PERSECUTED OF GOD’S PEOPLE.

Almost from the beginning of the settlement of this part of Long Island, the little town of Gravesend became a place of refuge for the oppressed and persecuted of God’s people, and the founders of this Church were the first to proclaim the principle of civil and religious liberty, and this principle, which formed the corner-stone of the spiritual edifice, has been faithfully and fearlessly maintained from that time to the present. They were encouraged and strengthened in their efforts by Lady Moody, who, deprived of her civil rights in England, sought refuge in New England, whence she was subsequently banished because of her friendship for the Quakers and her refusal to accept the religious dogmas of the Puritans. She received from the Dutch Government of New Netherlands a grant of land on Long Island which formed a part of the Town of Gravesend, and she thus became one of its founders as well as one of the founders of civil and religious liberty in America.

And Abram said unto Lot: “Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen, for *we be brethren*.”

“Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me; if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right.”

This was the spirit that animated the founders of the Jewish nation, the custodians of God’s written Word inscribed on tables of stone. This principle was proclaimed by the Great Teacher in what is known as the Golden Rule: “As ye would that others should do unto you, do ye also in like manner unto them.” And also in his interpretation of the Ten Commandments. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

It seems incredible to us of the present age that the professed followers of the meek and lowly Jesus could ever have been guilty of the cruelties practised against those who differed with them in

their religious belief, and whose only crime was that they worshipped God according to the dictates of their own conscience and willingly accorded to others the same privilege.

The spirit of persecution and religious intolerance was born with the Christian Church. It was first manifested in John, the "Beloved Disciple." (Mark IX, 38.) "And John answered Him, saying: 'Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name and we forbade him because he followeth not us.'" "But Jesus said: 'Forbid him not, for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name. For he that is not against us is on our part.'"

When the Puritans, the Non-Conformists of England, fled from religious persecution and settled in New England, they declared: "The earth is the Lord's and we are His chosen people." And they assumed the right to interpret the Word of God for themselves, but all other Christian believers must accept their interpretation of it, or suffer such punishment as they chose to inflict. Against Baptists and Quakers, Catholics and Episcopalians, they hurled their anathemas, and forced them to leave under threats of imprisonment or whipping, or other cruelties no less barbarous than those practised on the early Christians in the Apostolic age.

Rev. Mr. Upham, in his history of Sir Henry Vane, says: "Our fathers were guilty of great inconsistencies in persecuting the followers of Mrs. Hutchinson, the Quakers and others, inasmuch as they settled the country in order to secure themselves from persecution. They were often reproached as having contended wrongfully for the rights of conscience when they were themselves sufferers, and as then turning against others and violating their rights of conscience as soon as they had the power and the opportunity to do so."

There are many apologists at the present day for the Puritans of New England, but they must be judged by their acts. "By their works ye shall know them."

In 1640 the Court of Plymouth ordered that if any should bring into that jurisdiction a Quaker, ranter, or other notorious heretic, he should, upon the order of a magistrate, return such person to the place whence he came, upon the penalty of twenty-five shillings for every week such person should remain there after warning.

In 1652 it was enacted that no Quaker should be entertained within that government under the penalty of five pounds for every default, or whipping. In 1657 the Court of Massachusetts imposed

a fine of one hundred pounds on anyone bringing a Quaker into that jurisdiction, and a Quaker who returned after thus being banished to have his ear cut off; for a second offense to lose the other ear. Every Quaker woman so returning to be *severely whipped*, and for a third offense to have *her tongue bored through with a hot iron*. All this in the name of Christ!

Two hundred and fifty years ago the fires of religious persecution, lit by the Puritans of New England, were kindled in our own Town of Gravesend, and spread with amazing rapidity throughout the entire island. The efforts of the so-called Christian rulers and magistrates were particularly directed against the Quakers or Friends—the most exemplary, the most gentle, and the most loving of all Christians of that period.

The early Dutch ministers and ecclesiastical authorities of New Amsterdam seem to have been imbued with the same spirit of religious intolerance that characterized the Puritans of New England, having “a zeal not according to knowledge.”

Rev. John Megapolensis, in a letter to the Classis of Amsterdam, dated March 16th, 1655, says: “For we have here Papists, Mennonites and Lutherans among the Dutch; also many Puritans or Independents, and many Atheists, and various other servants of Baal among the English under this Government, who conceal themselves under the name of Christians; it would create a still greater confusion if the obstinate and immovable Jews came to settle here.”

By an ordinance made in 1656, anyone preaching doctrines other than those authorized by the Synod was finable one hundred guilders, and every one attending thereon, twenty-five guilders. In this spirit, in 1656, Governor Stuyvesant imprisoned several Lutherans, and in 1658 banished a clergyman of that Church.

The Classis of Amsterdam, in a letter to Rev. Megapolensis, says: “We learn from your letter that the Lutherans are very restless; that they hinder the pure doctrine and obstruct its course, requesting permission to hold public divine services for themselves, and to the end that they may have a Lutheran pastor from Holland.”

This request was denied by the authorities.

The rigid enforcement of the decrees of the Dutch Reformed Church brought forth a protest from the Directors of the Dutch West India Company, dated June 14th, 1656, addressed to the “Honorable, Virtuous, Pious, Dear Faithful,” in which they say: “We have seen and heard with displeasure that against our orders

of the 15th of February, 1655, issued at the request of the Jewish or Portuguese nation, you have forbidden them to trade to Fort Orange and the South River; also the purchase of real estate which is granted to them without difficulty here in this country. And we wish it had not been done, and that you had obeyed our orders which you must always execute punctually and with more respect; Jews or Portuguese people, however, shall not be employed in any public service in any city to which they are admitted, nor allowed to have open retail shops; but they may quietly and peacefully carry on their business as before, and exercise in all quietness their religion within their houses, for which end they must, without doubt, endeavor to build their houses close together in a convenient place on one or the other side of New Amsterdam at their own choice, as they have done here.

"We should also have been better pleased if you had not published the placat against the Lutherans, a copy of which you sent us, and committed them to prison; for it has always been our intention to treat them quietly and leniently. Hereafter, therefore, you will not publish such a similar placat without our knowledge, but you must pass it over quietly and let them have free religious exercises in their houses."

Policy dictated a lenient course toward the Jews and the Lutherans as there were men of influence and prominence among them, but their cruel and inhuman treatment of the Quakers brought forth no protest from her ecclesiastical superiors.

Against the Quakers who had by their peaceful and prudent conduct made many converts in some of the eastern towns of the island, particularly at Jamaica and Flushing, the temper of the Governor was violent and revengeful. Orders in writing, or placards, were issued by the town authorities, forbidding them to entertain members of the odious sect, and the ordinance of 1662 provided that beside the Reformed religion no conventicles should be holden in houses, barns, ships, woods or fields, under the penalty of fifty guilders for each person, man, woman or child, attending, for the first offense, double for the second, and quadruple for the third, and arbitrary correction for every other. The importation of seditious and seducing books, and the lodging of persons arriving in the province without reporting themselves, and taking the oath of allegiance, subjected the offender to severe penalties.

In the latter part of 1657 the Sheriff of Gravesend charged John Tilton with harboring a Quaker woman. On the eighth of

June, 1658, a written answer was received from John Tilton, late Clerk of Gravesend, that he gave lodgings to a Quaker woman. The official account of this is found in the action taken by the authorities.

"In Council, July 10th, 1658. Present, the Director-General, Peter Stuyvesant, and the Hon. Narcissus de Sille and Peter Tomlinson.

"The charge against John Tilton by the Attorney-General for lodging a banished Quaker woman, being read, together with the written answer of John Tilton in his own defense, the following sentence was pronounced:

"WHEREAS, John Tilton, residing at Gravesend, now under arrest, has dared to provide a Quaker woman with lodging, who was banished out of New Netherlands, so, too, seven other persons of her adherents belonging to the abominable sect of the Quakers, which is directly contrary to the orders and placards of the Director-General and Council of New Netherlands, and therefore as an example for others, ought to be severely punished; however, having taken in consideration the supplication of the arrested Tilton, in which he declares that the aforesaid Quaker woman came to his house with other neighbors during his absence, and further reflected on his former conduct, so it is that the Director-General in New Netherlands, doing justice in the name of the high and mighty Lords, the States General of the United Netherlands, and the noble Directors of the privileged West India Company, condemn the aforesaid John Tilton in an amende of twelve pounds Flanders, with costs and misses of Justice to be applied, one-third in behalf of the Attorney-General, and one-third in behalf of the Sheriff of Gravesend, and the remaining third as it ought to be.

On the 5th of October, 1662, John Tilton and Mary, his wife, having been received and committed before the Governor and Council of New Amsterdam of having entertained Quakers and frequented their conventicles, were condemned and ordered to depart from the province before the 20th of November following, upon pain of corporal punishment. It is presumed that through the influence of Lady Moody, the last sentence was either reversed or commuted for the payment of a fine, as they continued to reside at Gravesend for the remainder of their lives.

"The principal charge against Goody Tilton, as his wife was known, was having, like a sorceress, gone from door to door to hire and induce the people, yea, even young girls, to join the Quakers.

Her husband had been fined on the 19th of September preceding, for permitting Quakers to quake at his house in Gravesend. Thus our own town of Gravesend became the centre of religious persecution, and it is noteworthy that the first gun fired in defence of civil and religious liberty, was fired by the descendants of these same people, a fact that most historians seem to have overlooked.

“From the first appearance of the Quakers on Long Island it appears to have been the determination of Governor Stuyvesant to prevent, by every possible means, the dissemination of doctrines which he denounced as ‘seditious, heretical and abominable,’ and the whole sect was always spoken of with the utmost contempt and with the most opprobrious epithets. Among the first that fell under his displeasure was a Mr. Hodgson, who was charged with holding conventicles, and proceeding towards Hempstead he was seized by order of Richard Gildersleeve, a Puritan magistrate, and committed to prison. Information having been sent to the city, a guard was ordered to bring him before the Governor and Council. Two women who had entertained Hodgson were also taken, one of whom had a young child. They were put in a cart, and Hodgson, being fastened behind it, was dragged through the woods by night to the city and thrown into the dungeon at Fort Amsterdam. On being brought out the next day, he was examined, condemned and sentenced to two years’ hard labor at a wheelbarrow with a negro, or to pay a fine of six hundred guilders. With the latter alternative he was either unable or unwilling to comply, and was again confined without permission to see or converse with anyone. Being afterwards chained to a wheelbarrow and commanded to work he refused to do so, and was, by order of the Court, beaten by a negro with a tarred rope till he fainted; the punishment was continued at intervals to one hundred lashes, with the same result. After having been for some months confined, and frequently scourged as before, he was liberated at the solicitation of the Governor’s sister and banished from the province.

Rev. Johannes Megapolensis and Samuel Dresius were greatly alarmed in 1657 in consequence of the arrival of a shipload of Quakers in the harbor. A letter dated 5th of August, 1657, addressed to Reverend, Pious, Very Learned Fathers, and Brethren in Christ, states that: “When the master of the ship came on shore and appeared before the Director-General, he rendered him no respect, but stood still, with his hat firm on his head, as if he were a goat. The Director-General could with difficulty get a word from any of

them. He only learned that they had come from London in about eight weeks. When asked as to the condition of Holland, France, etc., hardly a word could be drawn from them. At last information was gained that it was a ship with Quakers on board. The following morning early they hoisted anchor and sailed eastward towards Hellgate, as we call it, in the direction of New England. We suppose they went to Rhode Island, for that is the receptacle for all sorts of riff-raff people, and is nothing else than the sewer of New England. All the cranks of New England retire thither. We suppose they will settle there as they are not tolerated by the Independents in any other place. That year there also arrived at Boston, in New England, several of these Quakers, but they were immediately put in prison and then sent back in the same ship. Probably fearing the same thing, these Quakers came this way and then passed on. But they did not pass from us so hastily as not to leave some evidence of their having been here, for they left behind two strong young women. As soon as the ship had fairly departed these began to quake and go into a frenzy, and cry out loudly in the middle of the street that men should repent, for the Day of Judgment was at hand. Our people not knowing what was the matter ran to and fro, while one cried "Fire!" and another something else. The Fiscal, with an accompanying officer, seized them both by the head and led them to prison. We perceive from this circumstance that the devil is the same everywhere. The same instruments which he uses to disturb the churches in Europe, he employs here in America. We trust that our God will baffle the designs of the devil and preserve us in truth and bring to nothing these machinations of Satan."

We note that he says "*our God*," and evidently intends to convey the idea that we—the Dutch—are His chosen people. While perhaps not as fanatical as the Puritans, the Dutch authorities arrogated to themselves the right to interpret the Word of God for others as well as for their own people, and freedom of conscience was not a part of their creed.

"The people of Flushing entered a strong protest against the command forbidding the entertainment of Quakers and others who advocated freedom of worship, in which they say:

"You have been pleased to send up unto us a certain Prohibition or Command that we should not receive or entertain any of those people called Quakers, because they are by some supposed to be seducers of the people; for our part we cannot condemn them in

this case, neither can we stretch out our hands against them to punish, banish or prosecute them, for out of Christ, God is a consuming fire, and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. We desire, therefore, in this case not to judge lest we be judged, neither condemn lest we be condemned, but rather let every man stand or fall by his own.

“The law of love, peace and liberty in the states extending to Jews, Turks and Egyptians, as they are considered the sons of Adam, which is the glory of the outward state of Holland; so love, peace and liberty extending to all in Christ Jesus, condemns hatred, war and bondage; and because our Saviour saith it is impossible but that offenses will come, but woe be unto him by whom they cometh; our desire is not to offend one of his little ones in whatsoever form, name or title he appears in, whether Presbyterian, Independent, Baptist or Quaker, but shall be glad to see anything of God in any of them, desiring to do unto all men as we desire all men should do unto us, which is the true law both of Church and State. Therefore, if any of these said persons come in love unto us, we cannot in conscience lay violent hands upon them, but give them free ingress into our towns and houses, as God shall persuade our consciences, and in this we are true subjects of both the Church and State, and this is according to the Patent and Charter of our Town, given unto us in the name of the States-General, which we are not willing to infringe and violate, but shall hold to our patent.”

In this dignified and spirited document are embraced the names of thirty of the principal inhabitants of the town, including Henry and John Townsend of Rusdorp, now Jamaica.

It breathes the true spirit of Christianity as taught by its Founder, and, moreover, it assumes the right of protest in accordance with their chartered rights; and only one blinded by passion and prejudice could fail to be impressed with the wisdom and justice of the protest, as well as by the humble Christian spirit which characterized its authors.

This document was presented the next day in person by Tobias Friaake, Sheriff, one of the signers,—all honor to him for his boldness and courage. Governor Stuyvesant was highly incensed, and ordered his Attorney-General, Narcissus de Sille—as narrow-minded as his august master—to arrest the Sheriff. Farrington and Noble, two of the magistrates, signers also, were taken and imprisoned. Hart, poor, weak coward, admitted writing the paper, saying he was requested to do so, as containing the sentiments of the village meet-

ing at the house of Michael Milnor. His weak excuse and cowardly demeanor did not save him from imprisonment. Better, a thousand times, had he boldly asserted his rights and defied the authorities, than place himself in such an humiliating position.

On the 27th of December, 1657, the magistrates of Rusdorp informed the Governor that the Quakers and their adherents were lodged and entertained, and unrelentingly corresponded in said village at the house of Henry Townsend, who, they say, formally convocated a conventicle of the Quakers and assisted in it, for which he had been condemned on the 15th of September, 1657, in an amende of eight Pounds Flanders, that had not been paid. He was, therefore, cited to appear January 8th, 1658. John Townsend, who had also been summoned June 10th, on being asked if he had gone with Hart to persuade Farrington to sign the remonstrance, answered that he had been at Flushing and visited Farrington as an old acquaintance, and that he also had been at Gravesend, but was not in company with the banished female Quaker. The Court, having suspicion of his favoring the Quakers, he was ordered to find bail for twelve pounds, to appear when summoned.

On the same day, Noble and Farrington were brought up and made verbal confession of being seduced and inveigled by Friake, and, promising to conduct themselves with more prudence in the future, were discharged on paying costs. Poor, weak mortals—objects of pity rather than contempt.

“The trials which followed,” says one writer, “may well be considered as a perfect mockery of judicial proceedings, and a burlesque on the administration of justice: inflated language, mixed with barbarous Latin, unmeaning technicalities, and affected ceremonies, are manifest at every step, and can produce in the minds of intelligent people only disgust. This feeling is increased by the fact that the accused were denied the privilege of counsel or even of defending themselves.”

On the 15th of January, 1658, Henry Townsend was again brought before the Council, and the farce ended by the Attorney-General declaring that, as the persons had before, and now again trespassed and treated with contempt the placards of the Director-General and Council in New Netherlands, in lodging Quakers, which he unconditionally confessed, he should, therefore, be condemned in an amende of one hundred Pounds Flanders, as an example for other transgressors and contumacious offenders of the good order and placards of the Director-General and Council in New

Netherlands; and so to remain arrested till the said amende be paid, besides the costs and misses of justice. On the 28th, the Sheriff Friake was brought from prison, "and though," says the record, "he confessed that he had received an order from the Director-General not to admit in the aforesaid village any of that heretical and abominable sect called Quakers, or procure them lodgings; yet he did so in the face of the placard, and, what was worse, was a leader in composing a seditious and detestable chartabel, delivered by him and signed by himself and his accomplices, wherein they justify the abominable sect of the Quakers who treat with contempt all political and ecclesiastical authority, and undermine the foundations of all government and religion, maintaining and absolutely concluding that all sects, and principally the aforesaid heretical and abominable sect of Quakers, shall or ought to be tolerated, which is directly contrary to the aforesaid orders and placards of the Director-General and Council; whereas he ought to have maintained and observed the execution of the aforesaid orders and placards in conformity to his oath, as he was in duty bound as a subaltern officer of the Director-General, and as Sheriff of the aforesaid village of Tlessingen (Flushing). He was, therefore, degraded from his office and sentenced to be banished or pay an amende of two hundred guilders.

"On the 26th of March, 1658, Governor Stuyvesant, in order to prevent as much as possible the consequences of Quaker influence among the people, resolved to change the municipal government of the town of Flushing, and therefore, after formally pardoning the town for its mutinous resolutions, says:

"I shall appoint a Sheriff acquainted not only with the English and Dutch languages, that in future there shall be chosen some of the most responsible and respectable of the inhabitants to be called tribunes and townsmen, and whom the Sheriff and magistrates shall consult in all cases, and that a tax of twelve stivers per morgen is laid on the inhabitants for the support of an orthodox minister, and such as do not sign a written submission to the same in six weeks, may dispose of their property at their pleasure and leave the soil of this government."

It thus appears that not only were the people denied the right of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own conscience, but their civil rights guaranteed by the original patents, were by and with the authority of the Dutch Government, denied them, and the great principle of "no taxation without representation"

which caused the colonists to rebel against the mother country one hundred years later, was born of religious persecution and was inaugurated by the Dutch Governor Stuyvesant.

It is interesting to note that about one hundred and twenty years later, on the Fourth of July, 1776, the day on which Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence, the first gun in defence of civil and religious liberty was fired on Long Island almost within the sound of my voice.

The British fleet, which had recently arrived in New York Bay, was making preparations for the great battle fought a few weeks later on Long Island. The flagship Asia, swinging around with the tide, was brought directly in front of Denyse's Ferry, now Fort Hamilton. Two twelve-pound guns, which the patriots of this locality had placed there, opened fire on the British, inflicting considerable damage. The Asia returned the fire, which silenced the two guns and nearly demolished the ferry-house. The men behind the guns escaped, but the record of their deeds will go down to posterity, they having fired the first gun in defence of civil and religious liberty.

The claim has been made that the first gun in the cause of American Independence was fired at Lexington, but the fact probably has been overlooked by most historians, or perhaps deemed of too little importance, that when the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill were fought, the colonists had no idea of separating from the mother country, but hoped that this rebellion, which had not even the semblance of a revolution, having no concerted action, would force the British Government to recognize their just rights. Washington and most of the great leaders at that time were opposed to separation.

"Thus to the people of Long Island, especially to those of Gravesend and New Utrecht, belongs the credit of striking the first blow in the cause of American independence and of civil and religious liberty, and we have cause for congratulation that in this twentieth century every man, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, may 'worship God under his own vine and figtree with none to molest or make him afraid.'

"Our little Church of Gravesend on this its two hundred and fiftieth anniversary may congratulate itself that the spirit of religious toleration has pervaded its counsels from the beginning down to the present time. The examples set by its early members, whose homes afforded a refuge to the persecuted Quakers, has been followed by their descendants, and your pastor, representing the views of the

people, gladly extends the hand of fellowship to every man in whose heart the love of God is the animating principle.

“It will be but a few years at most before denominational barriers shall disappear and the watchword will be: ‘Let there be no strife between me and thee, for we are brethren.’”

12 ANTHEM—“Praise the Lord.....*Brackett*

13 PRAYER—(The Pastor)

“Let us unite in prayer. Our Heavenly Father, we come to bless Thee for the largeness of this liberty which Thou hast put in our hand and in our power. We thank Thee that the day has passed from us when liberty of conscience was denied, when men were hurled unto the ground for their religious principles and their religious works. We come to Thee to Thank Thee that we are able to behold the time when the glory of God is brought before men, when the glory of God can be served, and His glory advanced by the churches and the power which Thou are giving to us in this world. We thank Thee that our eyes are beholding the day when Christ is rising in the earth, when His name is making itself heard in the ears of men, and we ask Thee, our Father, that by the exercises of this day and hour, we may have larger and more liberal views given to us, in the name of Thy Son, our Lord, Amen.”

14 HYMN (683)—“Blest be the Tie”.....

15 DOXOLOGY

16 BENEDICTION

17 POSTLUDE (Organ)—Commemoration March.....*Clark*



FIRST REFORMED (DUTCH) CHURCH, GRAVESEND

TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2.30 P. M.

REV. P. V. VAN BUSKIRK, Presiding.

1 PRELUDE (Organ and Violin)—“Hosanna”.....*Granier*
Mr. Alfred M. Voorhees, Violin.

2 ANTHEM—“King of Kings”.....*Brackett*

3 INVOCATION—Dr. Schenck.

“Let us unite in prayer. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for this place of worship with all its holy memories, with all its blessed inspirations and its glorious hopes. We thank Thee, God of our fathers, that Thou art our God, Thou are the God of our children; Thou hast spoken to the thousand generations of those that love Thee and kept Thy Commandments as the generations of Thy followers pass over the stage of the earth and on to the home above, and we worship Thee, the God worshipped here in days gone by, to be worshipped here in days to come. We worship Thee to-day; forgive us our sins; give us Thy grace in abundant measure. Inspired by Thy Holy Spirit may all the memories of the past, may all the joys of the present, may all the hopes for the future be offered to Thee now in loving adoration and worship. May Thy Spirit so be shed abroad in our hearts that for us it may be an exceedingly great and good thing to worship Thee. We ask it for His sake who has taught us to pray

‘Our Father Who art in Heaven’

Peace be with you from God our Father and our Lord and Saviour,
Jesus Christ. *Amen.*”

4 PSALTER—Psalm 96.

5 FEMALE TRIO—“The Lord is my Shepherd”.....*Bargiel*
Miss Louise Klencke. Miss Irene Storm.
Mrs. James Van Siclen.

- 6 SCRIPTURE LESSON—"Blessed is the man that walketh not
in the councils of the ungodly."

(From the First Psalm.)

- 7 CONTRALTO SOLO—"In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust."
Max Spicker

Miss Augusta Koster.

- 8 HYMN (742)—"Watchman tell us".....

- 9 ADDRESS—DONALD SAGE MACKAY, D.D., The Collegiate
Church, Fifth Avenue and Forty-eighth Street, New York
City.

"The Representative of the Old Church in Manhattan in 1628."

Brethren and Friends—Greeting.

It is not only a pleasure but a very great privilege to be here this afternoon to tender to you, however unworthily on my part, the kindly greetings and goodwill of the Mother Church, not only of Greater New York but of Protestant America. The Collegiate Church, dating from 1628, with a continuous history from that time, winning souls for God in the great life of our American Metropolis, joins with you to-day in this celebration. We rejoice with you in this service of commemoration, and as you interpret the sacred memories of the past into your prayers for a deepening and an augmenting of the Divine Blessing in the years to come, the Collegiate Church adds her fervent "Amen!" And may I also, dear friends, personally express to your beloved pastor my hearty congratulations on his continued success and on his devoted faithfulness to you during these many years.

It is no part of my purpose this afternoon to reply to the contention of a certain learned man who has sought to limit the sphere of human usefulness, but of this I am very sure: if we count life by its power to achieve, then we may felicitate your pastor upon many years of service with you still.

These commemoration services, which grow more common as the years pass on, have not only a distinct religious value, but they have a decided educational influence. I am glad that they are becoming more common, because they help us to realize how other congregations lived as we are doing, enriching the present by those

sacred memories from times long past. It is good to feel that in our passion for what is new, we are keeping before us this priceless heritage of what is old.

There surely can be no greater calamity for a people than to be ignorant of its past. It is a danger to which we as a country are exposed especially, because of that tremendous tide of immigration that has almost submerged us to-day. Nowhere do we see that more than in Greater New York. Within the last two years one million six hundred thousand immigrants arrived at these shores, and of that vast number no fewer than one-third declared the State of New York as their place of future residence. Of that number nearly fifty per cent. were entered either as laborers or with no definite occupation at all. It is inevitable that these new forces forming into our national life, will not only be ignorant of, but absolutely indifferent to the religious principles upon which our Republic is founded. Therefore, services like these bring before the public mind and deepen within the hearts and consciences of our children how much they owe to the past and how great a duty devolves upon them to perpetuate in the future, these vital principles which we have inherited from our forefathers.

It is a long call to two hundred and fifty years ago, and, no doubt, in the historical addresses which have been made to you, and which will be given later, the dominant note will be that of *contrast* between conditions as they existed upon this island two hundred and fifty years ago, and as they exist to-day. I think it just possible that we may exaggerate that contrast. We hear occasional comments, for example, on the vices of the early Dutch settlers here. We may exaggerate these faults so that we shall be blinded to the virtues and the magnificent principles which these men and women incarnated. Of course, many conditions existing here on Long Island two hundred and fifty years ago would be impossible and perhaps, ludicrous in our time. We learn, for instance, when we read one of the records of the Consistory of the Old Church in the Fort, that a certain woman was called upon to take her stand before the Stadt House and publicly apologize to Dominie Bogardus for having called him a liar. Well, perhaps there was a healthy influence in that kind of discipline.

The next year I find that the good wife of the Dominie was summoned before the Consistory to explain a certain act of carelessness, namely, that in crossing the street on one certain muddy day she ventured to lift her skirt above the heel of her boot!

If you were to ask me what was the difference in the religious life of men in 1628 or 1655 and the religious life in Greater New York to-day, I should put it this way: religious life then was a positive *influence*; religion to-day is a passing *incident*. In these early times it was the influential view of religion that impressed men. To-day it is merely incidental in religion. What is the result? It means that we are losing in faith; it means that conscience itself does not have the same authority in living that it had then. For example, how many of us know that the very first entry in the Magistrates' Records of the City of New Amsterdam, the very first paragraph in the Civic Minutes, is a prayer drawn up by our old Dutch Dominie of that day, for the Magistrates of New York. The prayer is in Dutch, but it has been translated into English and might, I think, be framed and hung up upon the walls of every court, of every Alderman's Chamber, and of every public office, as a reminder of what public office meant in the civic life of our city two hundred and fifty years ago.

In the prayer there occurs such a sentence: "Almighty God, so mercifully inspire us that all that we do may be for the defence of the public good and for the maintenance of Church, that we may be respected by them that do well, and a terror of evil-doers." There was the kind of civic ideal voiced by the Church, governed by religion, which existed when this Church of yours first came into being.

It is when we face facts like these, when we, so to speak, steep ourselves in the spirit of these early days, however much we may smile at the queer customs and all the rest of it, of your forefathers, we recognize that in looking back across the vista of the years, there are truths to be re-learned, there are principles to be re-interpreted and there is a gospel of righteousness to be re-preached which we may learn from them. What, then, is the practical outcome of this service? To glorify the past? Yes, surely! But not simply to be content with that.

There comes before me as I speak to you one of the grandest, most magnificent scenes, I think, in all human history, one of the immortal events, epoch-making in the life of the nation:

A dim November afternoon, a vast concourse of spectators, and there, standing before them, gaunt, unkempt, if you will, but with the light of a deathless purpose in his eyes, stands, perhaps the greatest figure of the Nineteenth Century, the President of this Nation, as he utters words that commemorate the battleground of

Gettysburg. No more soul-inspiring words were ever uttered than those which Lincoln spoke, almost on the inspiration of the moment, on that November afternoon at Gettysburg. And what was their purport? Let them be written upon the heart and conscience of every true American: "Not to consecrate the past, for that was in a sense impossible, but to consecrate ourselves to the future through the inspiration of the past." Therefore, it appears to me that these services this afternoon ought to bring every member of this Church to that definite point: Why am I an heir of the past? Why am I among those who have entered into these privileges which my forefathers have made possible? What am I going to do to hand on these privileges for the years to come? It is a personal question. It is a personal appeal, my friends, for a re-dedication of ourselves.

Now, I hesitated to use that word "consecration" simply because for a great many people, a great many good people in these days, it has become almost a term of cant. The cheapening of a word is the depreciation of an idea. The moment a word becomes current coin in the Kingdom of Cant, it becomes counterfeit in the Kingdom of Truth. A great many people have counterfeited this word "consecration," and cheapened the truth behind it, and yet I know no other word which will embrace that peculiar duty which these services should bring to the hearts and consciences of every man and woman, old and young, in this Church. What is consecration? It is the human side of a spiritual experience of which sanctification is the divine side. That is to say, through our consecration to God to-day, we become sanctified by God for eternal service. Sanctification is that condition of life in which every power, every energy we have, has been interpenetrated and transfused by the spirit of God.

Do you suppose these services would ever be forgotten in the life of this Church if each one of us passed through such an experience? Do you suppose that the influence of these services would ever be forgotten in the history of this community if they brought to you and to your Pastor, and to every member of the Church, that condition of life in which every power that you possess was interpenetrated by the spirit of God?

This duty of consecration rests upon a great need. And what is that need? I needn't remind you, brethren, that in these times there is a deep expectancy over the churches. Never within the present generation has there been a time when so many hearts have been steadily looking out towards a fresh revelation of God's power.

Over all the world there is a kind of hush as though we were waiting to hear the beating of the wings of God's spirit. It is coming. Here and there you can see the outflashings of God's dawn of new power.

Why should not this Church in this year of its commemoration and consecration become a center of this new utterance of God's message to the world? It may be so, and you can make it so, if you realize what the great need is which that consecration will supply. The need is spiritual power, power to flash through all the wires of our modern mechanism in church life.

Not for a moment would I disparage this wonderful age of religious organization. Not for a moment would I say anything to depreciate our work of committees and societies and auxiliaries, and all the other things which we have crowded into our modern church life. But we may have mechanical efficiency with spiritual deficiency. What we want is not preaching of God's power, but the doing of His works.

I remember once climbing one of our Scotch hills. At a great height—some four thousand four hundred feet—and near the summit we came to a little cleft, and there, in the hollow of the rocks reflecting the perfect blue of the sky and the shimmering light of the sun was a little pool of iccold water. There it lay, placid, clear and cold, in this cleft high upon the mountain top. Then I noticed that the water leaped over a fissure of rocks, increasing its power until it reached the valley beneath in leaps and bounds. Then I noticed how the river flowed on until by-and-by it reached a water-wheel and it set the water-wheel in motion so that it became the instrument of man's necessity. The water that lay up yonder, silent, cold, placid, became down there the channel of power and the minister of human needs.

In one of Paul's great prayers for the Ephesian Church, he prays that they may know the power of God to them who believe according to the working of the power of God's might. In that prayer there are four distinct words, any one of which might be translated "power," and yet each of which means something different from the others. It gathers up the spiritual meaning of that scene which I have just described. First, we have a word defining the power of God uplifted above human necessity. Far back in the eternities God's power lies placid and quiet like the water at rest in the mountain lake. Then there is the word which speaks of that Divine energy expressing itself in some mighty act of creative power

as the water bursts through the rocks in mighty torrent. Then there is the third word describing the Divine power in settled continuance in the constant forces of Providence like the river in its steady, resistless current over the plain. Lastly, there is the fourth word translated "power," which in the Greek is represented by one word defining God's power as it touches a human soul, as the water touching the water-wheel sets it in motion.

So, in answer to your prayers and through your consecration to-day, you lift your soul into living touch with the very power of God, as the water-wheel was set in motion by the water in the distant mountain cleft. The mighty power of God comes into direct contact with your life. Are we willing in this day of God's power? Are we ready to make this service supreme and practical by the opening of our lives to this divine power?

Oh, brethren, we have not yet touched the fringe of our own possibilities until the power of God lays hold of us. Some one has said that the human brain when it dies, even of the cleverest man, shows that only a third of its power has been developed. Men of science tell us that two-thirds of the brain cells are never used—die through lack of use. Who can tell how much of spiritual power unused by us would be set in motion if we would let God help us? There would be no limit to our possibilities.

Away back in the City of Glasgow, where I was born and brought up, in the center of the city's life there is an old-fashioned churchyard. It is filled up now and there are no more burials there, but if you chance to go into that old churchyard you will find a humble stone with a very simple inscription upon it. It marks the resting place of a factory girl, a young woman who earned but a very few shillings a week, who lived alone in a single room, but who devoted her life to the service of God. She gathered together on Sunday mornings a few of the rough factory boys and she taught them, and she became interested in them with her means, small as they were, until these boys grew up to manhood, and until each one of them became a member of the Church of Christ.

That class of factory boys became the nucleus of a vast movement that took root in not merely the city of Glasgow, but in many of the cities of Scotland and England.

That was her work; she never saw its possibilities. She died, and on her tombstone these words are written—words, you remember, that were spoken of John the Baptist: "He did no miracle, but all things that he said of Jesus were true, and many believed on him

there." And so in this quiet burying ground these words tell the story of a simple woman's life: "She did no miracle, but all things that she said of Jesus were true."

So, friends, while we thank God for the past, and while we rejoice with you to-day in the commemoration of these two hundred and fifty years of the goodness and mercy of God in your Church life, while we congratulate you upon this beautiful building, and on all these services of commemoration, yet let us remember that the call of God is not simply to the past but to the present to make religion not an incident but an influence, and to let your lives be the gauge of God's power in this great day of quickening, whose results in the near future none of us can fathom. None of us can dare measure the future, but may God make you willing in the day of His power."

10 SOPRANO SOLO—"I will extol Thee, O Lord!"...*Costa*
MRS. JAMES VAN SICLEN.

11 ADDRESS—F. S. SCHENCK, D.D., Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, N. J.—"The Representative of the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church in America."

Dear Pastor, Members and Friends of the Church at Gravesend:

It is a great honor and privilege to bring to you the greetings and congratulations and the good wishes of the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church of New Brunswick.

This is a very old seminary; it was organized in 1784. It is the oldest seminary for theological instruction on the continent of America, and, therefore, it is suitable that I should bear its greeting to this, one of the oldest churches in America of our denomination, and it is especially suitable since it is a part of your work, a part of the great work of this Church. You haven't thought of that, perhaps, during these days of sweet memories and great inspirations. Perhaps you have tried to imagine how much good the Church of Gravesend has been doing for two hundred and fifty years in the community where it has been placed, in the civil, and the educational, and the religious influences that have gone forth from this Church here in this place, and you can't overestimate the Church as a sacred source of blessed influence. It meets men

in the holiest moments of their lives, in their tenderest feelings, in their highest hopes, and shelters them and prepares them for living here on the earth as good citizens, as living for the community, and then it passes them on as through an open gateway into the glorious heaven of Christ's presence.

Two hundred and fifty years of that kind of work! Who can estimate its power and its importance?

Now, one of the features of this work: You, with kindred churches, have established a Theological Seminary for the education of Christ's ministers, and that Seminary has, during its hundred and more years of existence, sent out over eleven hundred ministers. Some of them have come to minister to you in your pulpit; others of them have gone to other portions of our own land; others of them have gone away over the seas to heathen lands, to preach the everlasting Gospel of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, for the elevation of mankind, for the lifting up of the race.—And you have been doing it! You haven't thought of it, perhaps, but it has been a part of your work, a part of the work of your fathers in the days that are past. Some of your sons, those related to this Church, at any rate, have passed through those halls and have gone to preach the Gospel of Christ, and some of the sons of that Seminary have come here to preach to you the Gospel of Christ.

I am not, perhaps, a son of this Church, and yet I am closely related to it.—It is said that in 1650 a ship came from Holland, and I have been told by those who exaggerated perhaps, that it was a ship full of gold. There were a great many Hollanders upon that ship; among others there were three brothers who went by the name of Schenck, and they settled in Flatlands, Long Island, and there was a mill there at Flatlands, the ruins of which existed when I was a lad. It was called "Schenck's Mill." Now, I think about that ship of gold; it must have been a very small ship or else a very small load of gold, or else the Schencks held but a very small part of it. As far as the gold is concerned I haven't very much faith in the story, but as far as the Schencks are concerned, that is the time they came over, and they came so near by you that I fancy they must have had some sort of relationship with this congregation. Then, my mother was a Vander Veer and a Voorhees, and was related to the Wyckoffs, and I had an uncle, Garrett Wyckoff, who lived at Flatlands, and when I was a lad I heard him tell how he sometimes wanted to go over to that little bit of an island here—Manhattan Island I think they call it—(it is now enlarging itself skyward)

and the means of conveyance was a kind of a boat that was propelled by horse-power, and he went with his loads of produce from the farm to this little ferry-boat, and so to the island. Now, he was the father-in-law of Henry Wyckoff, one of the elders of this Church, whom I used to visit when I was a little boy, and he was the father of Garrett Wyckoff, one of the elders of this Church, who died very suddenly a little while ago, and *he* was the father of Henry Wyckoff, who, I understand, has been a deacon of this Church. So you see that I am related to the Church and to the community very closely.

Now, I want to speak to you a little this afternoon upon that which we do not oftentimes think of. It is that God's work, if we can only link our work to it, goes on, and then our work becomes greater than we can possibly imagine. These fathers who founded the Church did more than they thought for when they founded the Church. They were thinking of their own privileges, their own place of worship, their own clergy, their own influence, and it was but a little thing, perhaps, but they have worked more than they thought for because they put in not merely brick and stone and wood into the Church, but their own godly character; and God took up that godly character and wove it into His work until it has become a part of the fibre and the strength of American civilization, and has extended beyond the little limit of the Gravesend Church of which they thought, beyond the little time in which they were living, through these two hundred and fifty years and over all this great city and this great land and way to the ends of the earth; and it hasn't stopped yet, and it will not stop at all as long as godly character from these godly fathers is devoted to the work of God and taken up by Him and woven into His great plan for the accomplishment of much good to the human race.

That man has very rich possessions who has a godly ancestry, and a godly ancestry oftentimes is the strength of the race character, refined, ennobled, sweetened, strengthened by Christianity, and we who come from Holland have that, a strong race character, sweetened and ennobled by Christianity, and it is very well for us to sometimes think of our good qualities and our noble ancestors, at the same time being able to recognize the good qualities of others and to be attracted towards others, and when they come to us to give them a cordial welcome. The Dutch Church has ever been willing to do that, and we have here upon the platform to-day an evidence of it (referring to the presence of Rev. Donald Sage Mackey, D.D.).

We saw a good thing and we knew a good thing when that visitor from Scotland came to our Church, was received into our Church, and he has represented the oldest Church to you to-day. And yet I fancy that he is a little sorry that he wasn't a Hollander, and we kind of sympathize with him because he isn't a Hollander, for we know that in the Holland character there is something peculiarly fine that has been wrought into it by the great measure of good through the blood of nations. In the very olden time it is said that the Batavi were never conquered by Rome. I guess that is so of Scotland, but Rome got nearer to the Batavi than Scotland. Scotland was so far off that Rome couldn't very well get at it, but Rome got at the Batavi but couldn't conquer; that is saying a great deal for it.

Then those Hollanders, through their enterprise and their perseverance and their vigilance, by capturing a land from the sea and holding possession of it in spite of all the storms of a northern ocean and making it the garden land of the earth; that is the native force of character; that is the strength of the Holland blood. Then it was sweetened and ennobled by Christianity. Word was brought to them of the Gospel of Christ, and they received it; and even before the time of the Reformation there was in Holland one of the brightest morning stars of the Reformation—Groot, who formed the Brotherhood of the Common Life that taught and believed in reading the Bible by all the people, and that prepared the way for the doctrines of the Reformation in the time when the Reformation came. So the Hollanders hastily accepted it and acted with it.

Hollanders sometimes marry, you know. We have the President of the United States, a strong man with Holland blood in him. He sometimes has said very strong words upon the subject of marriage and the family, but he has spoken them, as a rule, to other people than of Holland. He knew it wasn't worth while for him to talk very much to the Hollanders on that subject. They believed that; they believed in families.

Now, there is a very singular thing in marriage in Holland. The Duke of Burgundy, who ruled over Holland in the time just before the Reformation, had a daughter who married the son of the Duke's son of Austria, and that couple had a son who married the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella under whose auspices Columbus sailed, and that couple had a son who was born in the year 1500 and became Charles the Fifth, one of the greatest rulers of the

Sixteenth Century, having Holland blood, Austrian blood and Spanish blood, and he ruled over Holland first, then over Austria, then over Spain, and then became the great Emperor of Germany. Ruling in Holland he tried to check the Reformation, but the Hollanders were loyal to their rulers, and while they didn't rebel against him, they still clung to the doctrines of the Cross. When he abdicated the throne to his son Philip, who was still more severe in his government of Holland, then the Hollanders rose up in rebellion and four hundred of their nobles presented petitions, which were not granted, and then from every province and city rose up their delegates and representatives, and formed a convention of cities and declared their independence of Philip as unworthy to govern.

In 1581 Holland independence was declared. In 1776 we found it much easier to declare our independence because another nation had declared theirs before.

These provinces were bound together in a Civil Republic by a written Constitution. The provisions in that written Constitution created a form of religious liberty—the right to free conscience. And then the fight was on. After the persecution there arose the great War, and the persecuted thousands gave up their lives for the Cross. In the War they fought against an empire, oftentimes defeated, but largely successful, until they won their independence.

A hundred years of persecution and of war, to win their independence! While we had but seven years of war to win our independence! We admire and inherit that nationality of blood, that strength of manhood, and their religious life. It was the very fibre of their life. They fought and bled for their religion.

Now, look with me, about 1650, at two pictures: One here upon Long Island's shores; an Indian pacing along the beach and looking over the sea. He is an Indian; he has no very great national strain of force; he has no very great purity of religion, and he has not much education, and that horizon of the water bounds his vision, and all beyond is a mystery. There is no hope of a great future in him.

There is another group over in Holland—Hollanders looking over the sea. They have back of them that of which I have spoken—Holland's strength of character; they have back of them that of which I have spoken—this Holland religion; they have back of them this Holland Reformation, and they look over the sea. They are not forced out by anything from behind, but they are warned

by the perils before them, and they take the initiative; and here is a little, frail ship, and that ocean is an ocean of mystery and danger, and they embark in that frail ship with their goods and their wives and their children, and commit themselves to that great ocean of mystery and danger.

It is a great thing for the immigrant to come from Italy or Austria to-day, to take the initiative, not when he is persuaded by others to come but when he dares much to benefit his family and himself and to enlarge his life, to leave old lands and customs and friends and society, and come to this land. But he comes in a great ship that masters the ocean, and he has heard of this land with all its promise, and its good government, and its welcome, and it is a comparatively easy thing. But in 1650 they knew nothing of this land, knew nothing of the welcome that was to meet them. And that was the kind of people you and I had for ancestors, and they were the ones who settled here upon Long Island and formed their homes and soon builded their church; and they were the ones who started the organization that has gone on these many years, giving to this land its blessed influence. They brought with them that strong native blood; they brought with them civil liberty, the binding of provinces and representative governments by a written constitution; they brought with them religious liberty, and they have been a blessing to this community, to this nation and to the world. They did not think of it. If one of them came back to-day you would not find a more astonished person upon the face of the earth than the one who came and saw this great city and this flourishing community, and this Church, and thought of the Theological Seminary, and of the miracles of the Cross, and of this great nation expanding and influencing the world!

They did not know the extent of their work, but they did know that they were worshipping God: they did know that they were, in every circumstance of their life, putting their character into their work; and God took up their lives, took up their power, and wove all these into His great plan and purpose.

Well, there is a lesson for us. We cannot tell the future but we can all tell this much, that if we put our best thoughts and our noblest character into our work, if by the strength that we have inherited from a noble ancestry, and with all the achievements that we have obtained from their great lives, we go on to do the duty that lies nearest to us, we may trust in the great God to take up

our work and form it into His great plans, and so we may help to bring in the government of God upon the earth, and to lift up the race of man into fellowship with Him.

I congratulate you upon the past; I rejoice with you in the present; I bid you God-speed for all the future."

12 DUET (Organ and Violin)—"Trinity".....*Tobani*

13 PRAYER—DR. MACKEY.

"Let us pray. Oh, God, our heavenly Father, we beseech Thee to follow with Thy blessing all these services to-day. We rejoice once more in Thy great goodness unto this Church in all the history of the past. We pray Thee that Thou wouldst bless her still more abundantly in the days to come. We pray Thee that Thou wouldst visit with Thy great grace and power all the membership of this Church. We thank Thee for Thy goodness to the pastor; we beseech Thee, our Father, that Thou wouldst still more bless him in the days before him; fill his heart and mind with Thy power, and give him many tokens of Thy love. Bless the eldership and the deaconship and the membership here, and grant, our Father, that through these services there may be a deepening of spiritual life, a quickening of spiritual practice, to the honor and glory of Thy holy name, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen."

14 BARITONE SOLO—"Judge Me, O God".....*Dudley Buck*
Mr. John Lloyd Wilson.

REV. P. V. VAN BUSKIRK.

3.

"Allow me to express my thanks to our friends here for the inspiration they have brought to us. I hope that the words you have heard from their lips may be incorporated in your life of lives. It would be a great joy to me if I could see realized one-thousandth part of that which they have held up before my vision, and then, two hundred and fifty years from now, this Church would be a remarkable enterprise and have spread itself out so that multitudes more might engage in the same services in connection with our earlier congregation.

I hope that they will accept my personal thanks and the thanks of the Consistory and membership and eldership and deaconship of the Church, for the words they have spoken to us this afternoon.

It gives me great pleasure now to extend an invitation to every one who is in the house, at the conclusion of this service, to adjourn with us into the basement of the Church and partake of a lunch which has been provided by the Consistory, through the Congregation, for this occasion. If it should be necessary for any man, woman or child to think of going home, don't let them think of such a thing until they have gone into the basement and partaken of that lunch. We extend a hearty welcome to you and ask every person into the basement of the Church.

I ask now that the clergy and their wives, and the visitors who have been invited to participate in this occasion, shall remain in the Church until the congregation shall have taken their seats at the tables in the basement of the Church. Let the ministers bide in the church building here for a few moments until the congregation shall have taken their seats, as there has been a special table reserved for the clergy and their wives and visitors.

You will find in your departure from the building this afternoon a special program which will be put into your hands by the members of the Consistory and ushers; you are entitled to one of them, and we hope they will be a memory for many years to come. Take one of those programs to your homes.

The services to-night will be in the nature of congratulatory addresses by the different churches of the town, the old Town of Gravesend, for which an invitation has been extended to them to have themselves represented here in the person of their pastors. We expect them along with the addresses of the clergy who have been invited to make some remarks from the platform, and the representative of each individual denomination that is in the house to-night, in connection with this Town of Gravesend, will be invited to say a few words to the measure of five minutes' duration.

We will now sing.

15 HYMN (776)—“The Church’s One Foundation”.....

16 DOXOLOGY`.....

17 BENEDICTION

18 POSTLUDE (Organ)—March in B Flat.....*Barnard*

TUESDAY, MARCH 21st, 1905.

Evening Services.

REV. P. V. VAN BUSKIRK, presiding.

1 PRELUDE (Organ and Violins)—Symphony, Opus 109. *Dancla*
Miss Eva Marie Shenstone and Mr. Alfred M. Voorhees.

2 ANTHEM—"I will extol Thee".....*Greene*

3 INVOCATION AND SALUTATION. *Rev. P. V. Van Buskirk*

"Let us invoke the Divine Presence and blessing. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we come to rejoice in Thy goodness and mercy which Thou hast manifested unto us this day. We thank Thee and ask that Thou wilt continue Thy blessings unto us as we continue to exercise this our worship of Thee, as we pray to Thee in the enjoyment of Thy grace and Thy perfection, and as we go forward, wilt Thou grant that the Holy Spirit may come and manifest His power in us; may this Church receive His grace, and this community manifest it in each of our hearts. And now, may all the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in Thy sight. Amen."

4 RESPONSE (Choir).....

5 HYMN (727)—"Now be the Gospel".....

6 SCRIPTURE LESSON.....

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come they were
all with one accord in one place." (Sixth Chapter of
the Book of Acts.)

7 TENOR SOLO—"My Soul is Athirst for God".....*Gaul*
Mr. Harry R. May.

8 PRAYER

“Let us unite in prayer. O Thou Infinite God, we hunger and thirst for Thee, and we thank Thee that Thou opened Thy hand and thus satisfied the desires of every life in Thee. We thank Thee that Thou art infinite, omnipotent and eternal, and our King and loving, heavenly Father, and we come to Thee this evening with praise on our lips and in our hearts. We come to talk to Thee as to our friends and as one who speaketh to us more graciously than any other friend. We pray Thee to bring to this place of Thine some help from the past that we have commemorated. We thank Thee that Thou hast in this neighborhood ever kept this building which has stood as witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We pray Thee out of this occasion to instill in us a joy in our services and worship of Thee. We thank Thee that Thou hast advanced us in the fellowship with Christ in carrying out the great purpose of His infinite heart, and that He having left our earth yet remained in our midst in the spirit, and we pray Thee, O Spirit of the Most High, who does wonderfully receive many hearts, we pray Thee to move us here with Thy great power, and to stir these Thy people to renewed efforts and joy in the service of Christ, that they may conquer in His name. And so may they live unto the future, with hearts beating high with hope. We believe that Thou, O Christ, art marching on to ultimate victory. We believe the day will come when every heart to Thee shall bow, and every tongue proclaim Thee King, and may we march on with haste in Thy service, and, plunging into the future of our service with Thee, with such joy and such effort that the Church of Christ shall become a greater force for righteousness through the world.

We pray Thee to bless Thy dear servant, the pastor of this Church, and all whom Thou hast called to praise Thee here. Lead them to the Light. Let the service which Thy people render Thee be one of victory. Wilt Thou bless those who speak to-night, and those who are absent. Grant that all that we do may be to the honor of Jesus’ name, and taking up our cross, may we follow Christ, marching under His banner forever.

Forgive us our sins, teach us more of the things of Christ through the Spirit, and take us to meet the eternal King, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.”

9 HYMN (463)—“Nearer, my God, to Thee”.....

10 ADDRESS—REV. J. S. GARDNER, Flatlands, representing the oldest church on Long Island.

“Mr. Van Buskirk and the Church of Gravesend:

Most heartily do I bring to you the congratulations of the Church that is the oldest on Long Island. Two churches in the South Classis of Long Island are twin sisters, both having been organized on the same day, February 9th, 1654, although there is no question but that religious services were held at each of these places at irregular intervals long before 1654. We claim that our Church is a few hours older than Flatbush, having been organized in the A. M., whilst Flatbush was organized in the P. M. Flatbush cannot disprove this claim of priority any more than Flatlands can establish that it is so. As I understand, it rests on this solid foundation: The minister or ministers who organized, on February 9th, 1654, the Churches of Flatbush and Flatlands, came over from New York, and as Flatlands was the farther from Manhattan, the days short, the atmospheric conditions uncertain, like prudent Dutchmen, they performed the most arduous duty first and organized Flatlands Church in the A. M.

Thus, as pastor of the Flatlands Church, I bring to you, formally, the congratulations of the oldest Church, and, informally, that of the Flatbush Church, for even by silence I would not want to even seem to imply that Flatbush Church (the same age of the Flatlands Church) does not rejoice with you on this occasion. I say this with something of confidence when I recall the deep interest that Dr. Wells, who so lately entered into the higher service of the King, ever had in the Church of Gravesend and her pastor.

We are just a year older than you, but both organizations have attained to such dignity of years, that long since we have forgotten the patronizing spirit which that year entitled us to. Our antecedents and yours are quite different. Yours were largely English, ours were completely Dutch. The names of your early settlers, some of which are still with you, Stillwell, Bennett, Hubbard, tell us at once of England. Some of these, Sergeant James Hubbard and Lady Moody, came here to Gravesend for conscience sake, being denied in New England the religious freedom they desired.

For two hundred and fifty years the Churches of Flatlands and Gravesend have been near neighbors, and, as far as I know, never has there been anything but the kindest of feeling between the two. In fact, in quite a number of specific and individual instances I have

noticed that the regard has become so strong and the interest so deep, that a lifelong co-partnership has been arranged.

Two hundred and fifty years!—In the words of another, they ‘carry us back to the forest and the swamp, back to the days of the tomahawk and the Indian bow, of the wampum and the birch canoe.’ They take us back to the day of small things, to the beginning, not merely of this Church, but of the colonies.

That a church should be two hundred and fifty years old is an almost unknown quantity in this land, and some might be hasty and led to conclude that its days of usefulness were over. But the effective life of an individual or organization is not to be measured by the number of its years. This Church is an emphatic example of this statement. Never, in all your history, have you been physically so well equipped for work; never in your history has the population of Gravesend been so large as it is to-day; never, in all your Church life, have there been so many churchless and indifferent people within the sight of your church home as to-day. One great condition of effective life is that there is opportunity for service, and this opportunity of service is yours. I congratulate you that you are endeavoring to be worthy of these opportunities. For, be well assured, that the church which does not endeavor to be of service is old, no matter what its years; but the church that does serve men is ever young, though it may bear the years of the hills.

I wish to congratulate the Church of Gravesend on the men who have been its pastors in these later years. Three of them it has been my privilege to know—one, Mr. Hansen, fairly well, and two, Mr. Stockwell and Mr. Van Buskirk, intimately. Mr. Hansen, so lately called to his rest, was a man of scholarly tastes, as is shown by his book, “The Reformed Church in the Netherlands,” and the desire of his heart is revealed by the prayer, if you choose to call it such, with which he closes the volume.

Mr. Stockwell for fifteen years was your pastor. His life was devoted to the quiet round of duties of pastor and preacher. Who can ever forget his kindly manner, his winning smile? Born under the skies of New England, he had in his character many of the virtues which have made New England strong. His love of simplicity, his hatred of cant, his desire to do good.

Now for eighteen years Mr. Van Buskirk has been your pastor, under whose wise administration of affairs you have entered this

new and beautiful equipment. I know you love him, but do you realize the qualities of patience and quietness that must have been his during these changes?

One of your own number, a member of your Consistory, when you built this Church, said to me: "I wonder how we ever built the Church, and yet nothing disruptive overturned peace in our congregation. I am a stubborn man, and others in the Consistory liked to have their own way." I could have told him that much credit of the peace was due to the patience and staying power of the pastor.

Your pastor has the love and affection of all the members of the South Classis of Long Island.

My friends, before these old Churches of ours, which have stood the storms of the centuries, new problems, new conditions are coming, are facing us. Are you and are we going to be ready to meet them? From generation to generation, for over two hundred and fifty years, the care of them has been handed down from sire to son, as a precious heritage, and they entered into the general life of the community, and the Church was the center and the end of everything in connection with the town life. In the days that are dawning before us, this thing, to a certain extent, has got to come. The question is this: Will these old Churches, this Church and the Church of New Utrecht and my Church, conform to changed conditions of work and life, and will strong men rise to do the work to be done on new and different lines which God has given?

Mr. Van Buskirk and the Church of Gravesend, in the name of the oldest church on Long Island, I congratulate you most heartily to-night on all these long years of gracious service, the result of which, the sum total of which, will never be known until we have wiped the death damp from our brow, and passed beyond the portals.

Church of Gravesend, I congratulate you most heartily upon the men whom, through the providence of God, you have had standing before you in this pulpit, for their bearing as ministers, for their bearing as gentlemen, for their conduct as men among men. I congratulate you with all my heart to-night on every evidence which you possess of enlarging and increasing the usefulness of your Church, and may the God of your fathers, the God that your fathers worshipped beyond the sea and here, be your God to the last."

II ADDRESS—A. H. BRUSH, D.D., of New Utrecht. The oldest settled pastor in the Classis.

“Mr. Van Buskirk and Friends of Gravesend Reformed Church:

My first word is the salutation of my congregation, most sincere, and congratulations to you upon this very pleasant and important occasion, and their desire that the years that are to come shall be more full of divine blessings to you and yours than those that have already finished.

The Church of which I am pastor is called the Reformed Church of New Utrecht, or rather, at this time, the New Utrecht Reformed Church, and is a little in advance as to history of this Church in the matter of formal organization. If I am not mistaken, the congregation here did not organize quite as soon, within some years, of the organization that was formed at New Utrecht. However, as to the formation of congregations, both this congregation and my own are contemporaneous, or nearly so, as will be noticed by all who have paid any attention to the history of these localities. They were served by one or by a number of the same ministers belonging to a kind of Collegiate Church in this neighborhood, not simply here and embracing our own locality, but that of Flatlands and Flatbush, perhaps extending to what we know as the First Reformed Church of this locality, that was down at the City Hall in those years.

One of the many pleasant things to me about all this matter as belonging to one of these united Churches is that they have always been in such beautiful accord—such pleasant friendships and real intimacies. I don't recall in all their history that there ever sprang up disagreements between the ministers that were settled in these various parishes, or else that God's blessing rested on this community. It is a great deal that that is so. We may not be able to trace that to its exact source, but it is quite evident, if not entirely evident, that the hearts of this people were right, and that from the very beginnings here they intended to do the thing that was manly and kind and gracious one to the other. God grant that we may travel more and more in such ways. I have been privileged to live in this community for twenty-five years and quite naturally I have come to know in these many years numbers of people outside of my own particular parish, and I have remarked from time to time, that for helpful, sympathetic fellowship there is, after all, in these Dutch Reformed Churches with which we are

so familiar more here than elsewhere. In the History of the Church here I marked that one of the things as connected with my own Church was this: that the people here agreed every year to give a third of the firewood that should be needed by the Pastor in the Church at New Utrecht. And the second thing that they agreed to in each year was that any repairs upon the parsonage there should be taken care of mainly by this congregation.

Just in passing, brethren, I don't know but that it might be, upon this auspicious and delightful occasion, a good thing for you to renew that contract. We burn a little wood ourselves, and if you should bring it over and we are not at home, just put it in the window of the cellar of the Church. It will be all right, and when the parsonage wants repairing we will telephone to you.

We are here reminded anew that we are the heirs of the age, the happy inheritors of that age which is past. I have been impressed with a great many of the things I have heard of this celebration, and while I am not particularly familiar with the history or the parts of it that are particularly relative here, I am glad to know that some things have settled themselves in my mind. Now, we don't live in the past, or we should not, but we ought not to forget the past. God, in His providence, intends that it shall fasten itself upon more than itself, and so it does, either for good or ill.

Now, these really good—I think, *great* people—that lived so long ago, these historic people in Gravesend, I think a pleasant thing to think of in respect to them is their historic intelligence, and the thing to bear in our minds and to have impressed upon us that we may be better than we are, is the hard work that these people gave themselves to for the glory of God.

I have spent a couple of summers in the pleasant State of New Hampshire. That is a rocky country, as you may know. I have ridden there a great deal and I love it. I have been in the country before I went to New Hampshire; I knew what a farm was, and I have often thought of the downright hard labor in a high sense, that the men in the old times who were farmers put into their lives, and up there I was impressed by their thoroughness. You ride along, mile after mile, and you find everywhere you go the fields with great stone fences. Now, what does that mean? It means, if you have ever been in such places as that, it means a great deal of the hardest kind of work for these men to put those fences there, but you know everything about that—of the great rocks that must

be taken from the quarries or fields, but that is not all; it must be put there in place and shaped. Hard work, surely!

Well, these good people had to dig among the rocks that were here two hundred and fifty years ago, if not upon this soil so level and free from rocks and stones as it is, yet upon the moral field that was here all about, and they had to put forth their labor to the utmost, to do what they did do, and you and I look over these fields to-day and we say: "How beautiful!" and our Fathers looked upon them and said: "How beautiful!" And yet the beauty of these things is the work which these good people did. Another of the things that impressed me is that they really had the prophetic sight, these old men and women. What do you suppose they were doing that for? I don't know that any surer than that you wouldn't have thought that of the good people living yesterday, and some who are alive to-day and will be to-morrow, but he who serves and works as he should in this world is a prophet and he is prophesying by writing his prophecy in the energy that he puts into what he does, that it may stand not only for himself and his time, but stand beyond his time. That is what these people did. The prophetic eye and the prophetic sight they had. They were very penurious, if I mistake not, held things pretty firmly in their hands, while I don't believe that any more than I believe it particularly about people to-day, but it joins with what I just said; they prophesied and they gave way to you and to me. Here, at this reach of two hundred and fifty years, with the light of improvement round about us, in such a beautiful house as this is, and this splendid mammoth pulpit, let us not forget that these things came down to us from those who cared for us as you and I, I hope, are laying up in store, not for ourselves, but for our children's children, all the good things that God has privileged us to put our hands to and give our labor for.

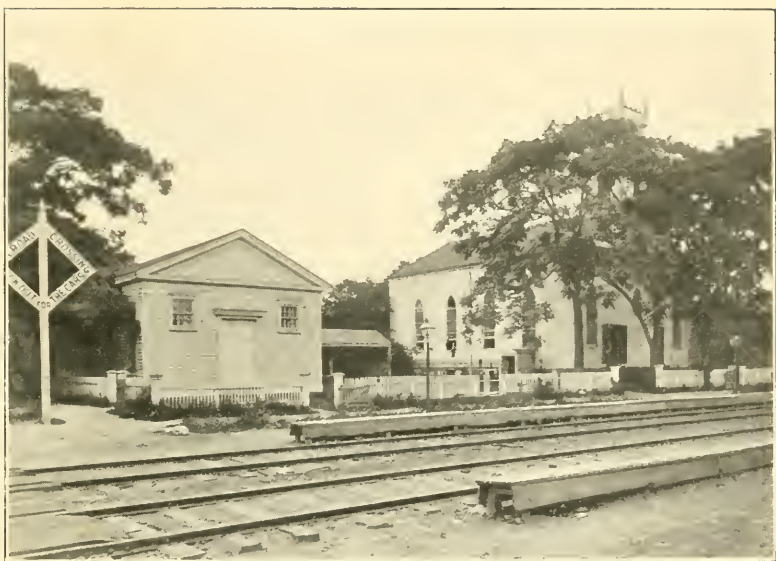
If you pardon me, I would like to pass on to one or two other considerations that have impressed me in regard to this beautiful building or home we honor to-day. I cannot quote it, but this is the idea: When the first pastor was to be called to this Church, an application was made to Amsterdam for a pastor. I notice that the request ran something after this fashion, "that they might have a pastor sent here for spreading abroad the glory of God." I said to myself: "Well, we boast in this time of ours of our liberal spirit, and we ought to, perhaps. We are very apt to say we ought to look farther, and it is right that we should. Let us not forget that

'somebody opened the way in the days that are gone as well as in the Twentieth Century.'" I am glad that I ever saw those words, although I can't give them exactly—glad that I saw them, for I felt myself those to be true with the spirit of truth and purity which was not born to-day. It is God-given, and it has always been in the heart that is true to Him. Just think! two hundred and fifty years ago, that they were so wide and free and full in their own hearts, that when they asked for a pastor it was with all truth that the glory of God might be spread. Can we match that? Are we not somewhat behind that now, when we come to think of it? Let us catch the influence and fire of it to-night, and beg those things of God when we are building for churches or ministers, and bring into our view pictures of all this when we ask for these things, ask for them largely.

In the second place they asked that he might send someone in order that the people might be instructed. Now, do you know, that I think I am not mistaken when I say that I have a conception that the religious revival we ought to get, and will get, in this Twentieth Century is a revival in the Church of God and throughout our land, upon that very idea and basis. We want to get back to the knowledge of the Infinite and the Infinite Truth.

You remember, do you not, what Carlisle said years ago in one of the tremendous times in England, when the writers were speculating as to what was the matter why people were irreligious; why this, with all the other denominations, was gathering so few into its folds? He came out in a few of his emphatic words, and he said: "I think that the whole matter with England is that England has forgotten that there is an Almighty God." And it was as true as God Himself. And when England heard that, England woke up to the fact that England had now to go back to find out something about God. Now, isn't it splendid to know that the fathers, yours and mine, had that splendid conception that there must be in every community, if things were right, there must be the deep feeling, and from the right source, of the things that were eternal.

I go one step further. I am impressed, too, with what was true of these people in this regard, that they gave a fine and continued and enthusiastic devotion and attention to the things of the house of God. Did they? Well, read the history. Their children should follow them. This reminder from the two hundred and fifty years is here to tell it; and it is no false thing to say that we,



OLD GRAVESEND REFORMED CHURCH

if living, could not have been sitting here under the Divine Life and in the enjoyment of these gracious things of this hour, had they forsaken the House of God. They loved the sanctuary and found the gates of Zion pleasant to them.

I have just this word to say, that I am impressed with this occasion, and this history of the times gone ought to lead us in this time to turn and ask ourselves whether we are going to heed that teaching of the times.

We think we are right, if we think at all, in the conception of the progress of the truth of the Almighty God and the advance of salvation among men, simply by the building anywhere of churches and letting them stand with a man in the pulpit who has to preach morning and night, Sunday after Sunday, to a half dozen people. Is that God's idea? Is that any man's idea? Is that one of the forces by which He ordains good shall come to this world and flow as a stream throughout it until it fertilizes everything?—Not at all! It is not entirely forgotten, thank God! But I will venture the assertion that here in this community of religious people, that one of the great forces which has been at work to maintain, establish, advance and glorify the religion of the Lord Christ is the devotion of men and women to the worship of Almighty God as He ordained it.

I have talked to you long, Mr. President and Friends. Pardon me. I have no more to say than just to repeat that I am very happy to be here. I am very happy that I am with these brethren in this beautiful session. I am glad that your Church and mine are such good friends. I am glad that we all are here. Now, I want for myself to step out from this time so memorable and so instructive, and be a better man and minister, and I am sure that you will carry away from this blessed time and from this place to-night what God is here offering and with full hands ready to give you; and let us go home resolved to love Him more, to love His Church better, to be fired with the spirit which filled the hearts and lives of those who have gone long before us.

12 SOPRANO SOLO (with Violin Obligato)—“The day is ended”*Bartlett*

Mrs. James Van Sicken.

ADDRESS by the REV. MR. McDONALD, of the South Reformed Church.

"Mr. Van Buskirk, dear Friends of the Gravesend Reformed Church, and the Guests who are assembled this evening:

I have been asked on the spur of the moment to bring a few words of salutation to you from the South Reformed Church. These words are entirely unpremeditated and, therefore, may promise to have some more certain condition of affection,—although I am not in any degree a believer in an unprepared address. I remember a Methodist clergyman who was a believer in that form of speech. He said to one of his deacons: "I don't study my sermons; I open my mouth, and the Lord fills it. Why," he said, "I frequently go from my door to the church door and select my text and prepare my sermon on the moment." "Yes," said the deacon, "and I am very much afraid, pastor, that is just what the people think of it."

I would not attempt to say a word on this memorable and solemn occasion, were it not that I am somewhat indebted to your pastor. It is but returning the compliment when I bring a greeting from the South Reformed Church. He came over when I was in sorrow at the Reformed Church a year ago, and very kindly and very forcibly charged my people that they should do all things to assist my ministry there. Therefore, I return to you a favor when I bring to you the greetings of the South Reformed Church.

All things in America are new, therefore we are impressed with the Two Hundred and Fifty Years of your Church. Our Church goes back only to 1838, just about seventy years of age. We are not you see, in the same class with you, although we believe that in these years we have done what we could for the Master's service. We count it a distinction and an honor to be permitted to say even a word on this occasion.

One of the blessings of my life is to visit the congregations of those who made history. One of the great moments of my life is when I stand upright on the sunken slab where Henry Ward Beecher sleeps: "He thinketh no evil."—I fancy I get somewhat in touch with the man whom countless thousands loved and countless thousands mourned. It is inspiring to come into such attune, but to come to the end of a period of service of two hundred and fifty years and find life full of power for the Master's service, is a great thing to record for the glory of Almighty God, the Lord of Hosts, the King of Kings. Any service for Him is a great service rendered.

What service they have rendered, these "forbears" of ours, as the Scotch people called them! What they have done and suffered and attempted in the name of Jesus Christ! How we have come into their labor and taken out of their hands the history so noble and so inspired, and tried to fill in our way the places they filled so nobly in the days gone by.

I hope the past will inspire you to be faithful in the hour of your activity. I trust that you will be found here uplifting the hands of your pastor in every way in which it is possible to uphold and strengthen them. That the pastor makes his people, is an old proverb, but it is old and truthful that the people uphold the pastor. It is the influence of three hundred against one. If you are apathetic, it is a damper upon his own spirit. If you are full of enthusiastic love for Jesus Christ and His Church, he catches that fire from you and brings it to the pulpit. He brings into his pulpit every Sunday a large measure of the influence his people have had upon him during the week that is past. No man who stands in this place is dependent upon even the best people to whom he ministers; he has Jesus Christ for his friend, the Spirit of God for his enduring power. Nevertheless, your influence tells upon your pastor's work. Remember, then, when you tell him things; keep your difficulties hidden; bring your successes to the front. If your pastor finds as he goes among you, some light of the Spirit of God upon your faces as he talks to you, he will go back to his home encouraged. He has asked God to assist him in his help of you and is enthusiastic in His service. Jesus Christ noted the friends of His people. He appreciated what was done in His name. I suppose you and I have never met anyone who appreciates so fully as Jesus Christ appreciates the services rendered in His name. In the story of the "Widow's Mite" we learn of the great crowd in the Temple, the mass of the people dressed extravagantly and dropping in as their offering large coins of gold, when the widow came in poor garments, with two mites in her hand and two little children holding by the skirts of her gown, and Jesus Christ said: "I say unto you, she has cast more, of her all, than they did cast of their abundance."

The word "abundance" describes what was left of the loaves and fishes when they had eaten all they could; then what was left was the "abundance," and from that abundance many gave to Christ, out of what was left they gave to the cause of Christ. But this woman out of her living gave to the Master's cause, and God

appreciated it, and it made her famous throughout all the years of history.

You have the same chance to be noted by Jesus Christ when you see Him as one who would give up from your own heart's blood to serve Him and see that the observance of His home is fulfilled.

Are not these great days in which we live? I used to go back in history and live in the days of old, but I believe that the greatest days the Church has seen are to come upon it. I believe we are going to see the greatest triumph of the Cross that History has yet seen, and you and I are here to take part and labor in the service of God. Will you be ready for that? Are you willing that the Spirit of God should use you?

Our ministers are all telling us everywhere that the greatest spiritual movement the world has seen is to come to pass. Let us lift on high our souls that they may be filled with the wine. Let us not be called upon in vain when the wine of blessing comes.

I remember being with friends by the side of the Miramichi River in New Brunswick. As the changing lights of the sunset fell upon an out-going ship it stopped. The water was turned by its propellers, but it refused to move. We wondered what the trouble was, when it became apparent that it was right on a sand-bar, and after straining all the engines that the ship possessed they signalled for tugs, and after laboring there for an hour or two hours they finally cast off their lines and went back to port. And the vessel lay there and the moon came out. Then that vessel rose; went up over the bar as easily as a match would be lifted; went over across the sea.

The secret? The tide had come in; the almighty power of God had come in and lifted it up.

Beloved, I believe we shall see the tide of the spirit of God come in upon the churches of our day. Let us be ready then for effective service in the Master's service. You in this Church see that your Pastor is upheld before the throne of God. You may get the fire of the spirit before the rest of us, and send it on to us; we all need it. Will you in this time be men and women of the hour, ready to receive what God in His grace seems ready to give unto you?

Now, I bring to you, beloved, the most sincere congratulations of your sister Church and the most sincere hopes that the two hundred and fifty years to come may be so far in advance of the two

hundred and fifty years past that even you and I are not in this hour able to imagine it.

The Lord be with you and with your Pastor and with your labors."

(*The Pastor*) "It was not a small part of my privilege to recognize that there were other churches in Gravesend. Since the construction of this Church we have had established here the Episcopal Church, and there has been established the Methodist Church, and there has been established the Baptist Church, and the Presbyterian Church. I should be glad to call on each of these brethren for a ten minutes' speech."

REV. MR. HYDE, Rector of the Episcopal Church at Sheepshead Bay.

"Worthy Pastor, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Congregation:

It gives me great pleasure to speak to you, and yet at the same time some of you must have wondered why an Episcopalian has come to address your congregation, and I can give you a reason, a splendid historical reason, why an Episcopalian minister should stand here and address you, Reformed Churches or Lutheran, because it was a Hollander, it was William, Prince of Orange, that came over to England and made the Reformation not only possible, but permanent. And it was a Hollander that gave the great impetus to freedom in Great Britain herself, and the very Bibles when translated had to be printed in Holland and in Germany, and came over to London to be burned by a Roman Catholic Bishop.

So that the currents of reformation and religion that came from this little district of Holland, each introduced itself into the prayer-book, into the very Constitution, as it were, of the English Church and religion, and that is the reason why I have come here.

I received a very peculiar invitation; it was worded very peculiarly. I have been so busy lately that all the invitations I have received I have thrown into the waste basket, but this invitation which came from your Pastor was worded so carefully that I thought I had better come over here and see what you were doing. The invitation was not only that I announce to my people that there was to be a great demonstration and outpouring of the spirit here in

new and beautiful equipment. I know you love him, but do you realize the qualities of patience and quietness that must have been his during these changes?

One of your own number, a member of your Consistory, when you built this Church, said to me: "I wonder how we ever built the Church, and yet nothing disruptive overturned peace in our congregation. I am a stubborn man, and others in the Consistory liked to have their own way." I could have told him that much credit of the peace was due to the patience and staying power of the pastor.

Your pastor has the love and affection of all the members of the South Classis of Long Island.

My friends, before these old Churches of ours, which have stood the storms of the centuries, new problems, new conditions are coming, are facing us. Are you and are we going to be ready to meet them? From generation to generation, for over two hundred and fifty years, the care of them has been handed down from sire to son, as a precious heritage, and they entered into the general life of the community, and the Church was the center and the end of everything in connection with the town life. In the days that are dawning before us, this thing, to a certain extent, has got to come. The question is this: Will these old Churches, this Church and the Church of New Utrecht and my Church, conform to changed conditions of work and life, and will strong men rise to do the work to be done on new and different lines which God has given?

Mr. Van Buskirk and the Church of Gravesend, in the name of the oldest church on Long Island, I congratulate you most heartily to-night on all these long years of gracious service, the result of which, the sum total of which, will never be known until we have wiped the death damp from our brow, and passed beyond the portals.

Church of Gravesend, I congratulate you most heartily upon the men whom, through the providence of God, you have had standing before you in this pulpit, for their bearing as ministers, for their bearing as gentlemen, for their conduct as men among men. I congratulate you with all my heart to-night on every evidence which you possess of enlarging and increasing the usefulness of your Church, and may the God of your fathers, the God that your fathers worshipped beyond the sea and here, be your God to the last."

II ADDRESS—A. H. BRUSH, D.D., of New Utrecht. The oldest settled pastor in the Classis.

“Mr. Van Buskirk and Friends of Gravesend Reformed Church:

My first word is the salutation of my congregation, most sincere, and congratulations to you upon this very pleasant and important occasion, and their desire that the years that are to come shall be more full of divine blessings to you and yours than those that have already finished.

The Church of which I am pastor is called the Reformed Church of New Utrecht, or rather, at this time, the New Utrecht Reformed Church, and is a little in advance as to history of this Church in the matter of formal organization. If I am not mistaken, the congregation here did not organize quite as soon, within some years, of the organization that was formed at New Utrecht. However, as to the formation of congregations, both this congregation and my own are contemporaneous, or nearly so, as will be noticed by all who have paid any attention to the history of these localities. They were served by one or by a number of the same ministers belonging to a kind of Collegiate Church in this neighborhood, not simply here and embracing our own locality, but that of Flatlands and Flatbush, perhaps extending to what we know as the First Reformed Church of this locality, that was down at the City Hall in those years.

One of the many pleasant things to me about all this matter as belonging to one of these united Churches is that they have always been in such beautiful accord—such pleasant friendships and real intimacies. I don't recall in all their history that there ever sprang up disagreements between the ministers that were settled in these various parishes, or else that God's blessing rested on this community. It is a great deal that that is so. We may not be able to trace that to its exact source, but it is quite evident, if not entirely evident, that the hearts of this people were right, and that from the very beginnings here they intended to do the thing that was manly and kind and gracious one to the other. God grant that we may travel more and more in such ways. I have been privileged to live in this community for twenty-five years and quite naturally I have come to know in these many years numbers of people outside of my own particular parish, and I have remarked from time to time, that for helpful, sympathetic fellowship there is, after all, in these Dutch Reformed Churches with which we are

is plentiful but the laborers are few." And if we can only let these sentiments sink into our hearts, that we are laborers with God, that every prayer you utter is an act that is working for your good. Do not think it trifling; the world is made up of little things, and so is Christianity, and so is the success of your Church.

I wish you all a hearty congratulation and an earnest benediction; I wish you all success and prosperity; I wish that you may grow and enlarge, and that the work of Christ may go on. I invoke this same Apostolic benediction upon your pastor and wish him all success.

The blessing of God rest upon us forever. Amen."

(*The Pastor*) "Among the most recent in the community in our Church organizations probably is the Presbyterian Church at Homecrest. We have heard the Rev. Mr. Tibbles before. I am very glad that I did not make the mistake in sending to Mr. Tibbles that I did to Mr. Hyde. I did not know that Mr. Hyde had no wife. I knew that Mr. Tibbles had no wife, and, therefore, I said that he should invite his mother. If I had known that the Rev. Mr. Hyde had not a wife, I might have said that he might bring *his* mother, but perhaps that would have been just as fatal a mistake as I made when I invited him and his wife, not knowing that his wife had departed this life."

(*Mr. Tibbles*) "An unusual introduction.—I was wondering how your pastor knows so well my family history. It puts me in mind of the story I heard Dr. Carson tell: 'Two Irishmen were talking. One said: 'We had a sweet little baby come to the home to-day.' The other said: 'Was it a little boy?' The first said: 'No.' 'Well, it was a girl, then!' 'How did you know?'"

So I did receive an invitation, but your good pastor had just drawn a line through the word "wife" and put "mother" over it. So I am very glad to be here and to greet you, dear friends and members of this Church, and your good pastor.

You see, Dr. Hyde, I am somewhat in the same boat. (Speaking of Dr. Hyde and his Church. And the Episcopalians all getting interested.) I rang up a party on the 'phone the other day and told them that now we had a church full of Brooklyn people ready to rouse themselves for the revival, and we wanted to get all the young folks together. I had a conversation on the telephone; then I left it, and a little while after the person rang me up and said: "Are the Episcopalians going to join us?" I said: "Yes!" And he said: "Thank God!"

We are going to have a revival meeting soon in Homecrest, and have a prayer meeting preparatory for the great revival because that Church has been selected for this section of the city.

Now, this Church for two hundred and fifty years has been sending out its beacon light. Its rays have reflected Christ Himself here in this section. It has always stood for the grand old creed of Jesus Christ! Its pastors have been faithful; they have been devoted souls to the Christ who saves from sin. It is an angel of history who would dare to try to put down in figures the power and influence of this Church, its influence upon this community, its influence upon this city, how it has developed and rounded out citizens and good Christians.

I thank God, dear friends, that as a servant of God, when a soul comes to me and says he wants to believe in Jesus Christ and serve Him, I can welcome him to the Church of Jesus Christ. I am glad that under the present conditions we can welcome them to the Church, and so, dear friends, those of you who are interested in this Church,—I speak especially to the young folks—be faithful to the past, to the traditions of this Church; continue to sustain it in spirit and in truth; continue to stand with your pastor and help him in his work.

Now, I think I represent the youngest Church—four years and nine months old—just a little baby. I know what it is to try to organize a church, and I say it is hard work. It takes all the strength a man has to call during the week and to try and raise money, and then, with a tired brain, to try and write two sermons, and with not the support of all those who are interested in our churches in the various sections.

I am so glad we are going to work together. Friends, there is a grand future for this Church! You have a splendid equipment here. There will be new conditions and families gathering about this Church, and with your fine organizations and your Christian Endeavor Societies you are gradually going to improve them further and bring them into the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

I hope this Church may continue to send out a message; just present to them the Christ, Christ who saves from sin. How glad we ought to be we are living in Brooklyn! You have seen indications of this coming revival, and last Sunday night it came through our way. We never had such a meeting before; it was the first time I never preached a sermon in five years. We just sang the old hymns, and men got up there and testified who never spoke in our Church

before. I never felt such a power. When I went into the meeting and tried to offer a prayer, I nearly broke down.

God is just waiting to pour out His Holy Spirit if we only prepare our hearts and our minds.

I went to the two meetings to-day at Dr. MacAfee's Church. There wasn't a dry eye, and that is what we have got to do, friends, as pastors and members of Christ's Church; we have got to get down on our knees and cry out: "Oh, Lord, create within me a clean heart!"

We are going to receive a new inspiration. I am giving out a solemn warning to those who are not in our churches, and let us thank God that the tide is coming in, and may God give to each one of us, as Pastor and as people, a new inspiration. God bless this Church! God bless these members? God bless your dear Pastor and wife, whom we love and admire."

(*The Pastor*) "The question has been raised in my mind whether the Presbyterian Church at Homecrest or the Methodist-Episcopal at Gravesend is the older or the younger. I am sure the Methodist-Episcopal Church at Gravesend is the younger organization and it has been our precious privilege to have been acquainted with two pastors who have been there. I introduce to you now the Rev. Mr. Bronson, Pastor of the Methodist-Episcopal Church at Gravesend."

"Fathers and Brothers:

It is a great privilege indeed and a pleasure for me to bear to you the greetings of the Methodist-Episcopal Church at Gravesend, and I believe if I had the voice of the other Methodists in this County I would bear to you the greetings of that Church which has walked by your side and is endeavoring to collaborate Christ in their work and lives.

I am indeed grateful to-night that it is my privilege to be here. I have looked forward to this day, to this time, with pleasure. I believe that there must be—I *know*, in fact, that there is—an inherent value and worth in this great organization that has continued against odds to exist for Two Hundred and Fifty Years! The struggle for existence has been felt by this Consistory. It has not been borne to this time on flowery beds of ease by any means, but it has been a struggle, but through the struggle, every time and all the time, it has been triumphant.

I remember reading in the Scripture when Paul went over

into Macedonia to make a call that he found there a woman named Lydia—he found there a Christian, and that Christian woman who had preceded the great Apostle, who had carried with her the light of life that she had received before, welcomed him into her house, and to-night we have the Methodist-Episcopal Church, our own, that one which came to this community, and the Dutch Church of this community not only welcomed us into their house, but gave us a house to worship in.

We are indebted to you and we feel that in no small degree we are a part of you, and therefore we congratulate ourselves to-night that we, in some degree, can share in this anniversary.

I want to bear to you to-night the congratulations from my own heart, of the fellowship and kindliness that I have received from these people, and especially from the Pastor of this Church. I have been welcomed to his home and I have been welcomed to his Church, and I have been treated with courtesy and with thorough kindness.

Permit me again to bear to you our congratulations, and it is our prayer that you may go on in the future, and this inherited value and worth that is in you, which is the Kingdom of Christ in the earth and in this Church, may continue forever.

“Say not, who will say the Word has died?

Who will say the hour triumphant is past?

Sparks from Heaven within us lie,

“Flash and re-flash till the last.”

(*The Pastor*) “I regret exceedingly, and apologize to Dr. Farrar, for moving him on the program down to the very end of it, but I had a purpose in doing that. He knows that purpose now, I think.”

REV. J. M. FARRAR, D.D., the First Reformed Church, Brooklyn,
representing the Classis.

“Mrs. Van Buskirk and the Reformed Church of Gravesend:

“Like wife like Pastor.”—It is the wife who deserves much of the credit for the magnificent work that has been done in this community for the last eighteen years.

A gentleman built a new house and a lady visiting there one evening was taken by his wife through the house, and she showed

her the room her husband called his "den," and asked: "Has your husband a 'den?'" and the wife answered: "No, he roars all over the house."

Now, every minister has a "den," and it is the wife who looks after him, tones him down, puts him in good disposition by a splendid breakfast; then kisses him and sends him out to his congregation, and they all praise him. Look well to the wife; be kind to her; she is back of every sermon, back of the kind, loving, sympathetic pastor.

As the representative of the South Classis of Long Island, I am here officially, but personally I am here because I love Dominie Van Buskirk and the congregation to which he has so faithfully ministered. It is an honor to stand either officially or personally in this modern and beautiful Church and to be thus linked in the history of a successful Christian work of two and a half centuries.

In the midst of this joyful celebration there is a note of sadness and regret. We miss one who would have represented the Classis and whose personality and life service gave him the seat of honor in all our assemblages—the Rev. Dr. Cornelius Low Wells. This generation must pass away before any celebration connected with the South Classis can be complete without his presence as counselor and companion.

An anniversary is an eastern window in the Church of to-day through which we look out upon the avenues of yesterday; and a western window through which we look for the opportunities of to-morrow. The past has its lessons for the present. The mills of the Reformed Church grind slowly but they grind; slowly, quietly, systematically they grind exceedingly fine. The Church is best known not by her noise, but by her policy and products. The old mill kept its toll and sent out its products to the homes. The Church we represent has kept a small toll and sent out her grist to sustain every denomination now within her original parish. The first Dutch Church in America was organized in a mill, and the homes to which her product has been sent are the measure of her work. Measured by the true standards of value this organization has made great progress during her quarter millennial history.

Our denomination, to change the figure, has moved so smoothly and with so little friction as to cause some on board to imagine she is anchored.

As a Dutch sailing vessel was moving out of port the cook, in emptying the dishpan, threw overboard some knives and forks. He carefully marked the place on the ship from which he had thrown

them, and when they anchored at a distant port he dove overboard to find his lost property. He learned then what the captain knew all the time that the ship had the same anchor, but not the same anchorage. The cook stuck head down in the mud, a thousand miles from his lost property, and the legend is that those who sail into that port can hear, when the tide is out, the cry of the pessimistic cook against the slowness of his ship.

Our old Dutch ship is slow, proverbially slow, actually slow, so exceedingly slow that she has not gotten away from the Bible as the Word of God. Two hundred and fifty years ago our fathers did not say that the Bible *contained* the Word of God, but that the Bible *was* the Word of God. We have and revere the same old Book that our fathers spread upon the pulpit of this Church two hundred and fifty years ago. Too slow we have been to sail away from the divinity of Jesus Christ. Our fathers of long ago made no distinction between the deity and divinity of Christ. To-day we would not be embarrassed if the founders of this Church were to rise and ask: "What think ye of Christ?" Our answer would be: "We think as our fathers thought, that He is the Son of God."—So slow, so slow is our old Church that when the flood of retribution comes we will be found within the old Ark, ready to sail to some mountain top of safety.

But I must not spend too much time at the eastern window. There is a western window. We owe a debt to the future, and turning from the east window through which we have been looking back, we must look out through the west window to the work that is before us. The man who takes a harvest from the field without an adequate return is a thief. The parent plants a tree not alone that he may sit beneath its shade, but that his children may gather its fruit. We honor the man who, for the sake of his children, cuts a pathway through the forest; we honor the children who sow the grain where the forest once stood.

Let your anniversary be the reaping time for the present and the planting time for the future; tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.

It was the Dutch who transmitted to the world, to a greater extent than any other nation, Christ's legacy of love to children. St. Nicholas is our patron saint. The Dutch gave us the word "Kinderhook"—children's corner. Through the children let us pass the blessing on. At these anniversaries we are the present—they are

the future. And remember while we are speaking of two hundred and fifty years, speaking of our age and of our dignity; remember that if this Church is to exist in the future, we must take off our hats and bow before the children of to-day. The future Reformed Church of Gravesend must stand to-day like the little girl of whom someone asked: "How old are you?" She said: "Why, I am not old at all; I am almost new."

The future Reformed Church stands "almost new" to-day before us. In our Sunday School, in our primary classes, this is the Church of the future, and we must transmit something to them.

When a farmer was told that he should plant a young orchard because the old one would soon cease to bear, he said: "It will bear enough fruit for me." But they said: "You must remember posterity; you should plant an orchard for posterity." The farmer answered: "What has posterity done for me?"

What have our ancestors done for us? You have done nobly; you have inherited the past; you have erected this beautiful church as a monument to the past. But your work is not half done; you must transmit, transmit—send down this work through the generations yet to come. Transmit the power from heaven.

Our ancestors were praying people; they had the old family altar and they bowed before it, not on the seventh day alone, but they bowed before that altar seven days in the week.

We good old Dutch people are very fond of heirlooms. We like to show the old Bible, the old Dutch Bible with the heavy clasps. We like to show the old spinning wheel, and we have a number of old relics that have been through the fortunes of the past. I do not find as many good old Dutch people, as I would like to find, who point with pride to that old heirloom, the family altar. That is the richest inheritance from the past. Let us hand down the family altar! Let us hand down prayer! The power of the universe to-day, let us hand down the habit of prayer to the future!

Randolph of Roanoke said: "I should have been a French theist but for the memory of the time when I knelt at my mother's knee and said: 'Now I lay me down to sleep.'"

Transmit the legacy of prayer, and transmit character, the real life character, the character that you are putting into your business and putting into your farms, putting into your everyday work.

The tutor of Nero will be held to a stricter account before God than he was held on earth. The character that is held before the

children is the character that will tell when we are dead. Pride of the past! this we glorify to-day, but let us not forget our duty to the future. Transmit a discerning and decisive public conscience. Our fathers gave us a conscience, a public conscience, a conscience that stood for something. Those people who came down to Gravesend for conscience sake came down here to worship God as they believed He ought to be worshipped, stood not only for their conscience, but they stood for the public conscience, and they created a conscience in this community. We have inherited this public conscience. It is our duty and our privilege to pass it on.

Starting away from these two hundred and fifty years, let us create something for the Five Hundredth Anniversary with which our names will be associated for good or bad.

This morning in Winsted, Connecticut, as I was sitting in the hotel, there was a great excitement, and someone said: "A team of horses are running away!" I was in an interesting conversation with some gentlemen, and I said: "They are not mine." Just then someone said: "There was a little girl in that wagon." Then I said: "They *are* mine!" and I started to my feet. One of the gentlemen, mistaking my idea, said: "Why, have you a team here?" I said: "Any team running away with a little child in the wagon is mine." I feel responsible for the child of to-day.

Friends, while I bring to you the congratulations of my own Church and the congratulations of our Classis, and the sympathetic congratulations of my wife to the wife of your pastor, I want to leave this as my parting word with you, the earnest word that I pray you to remember. The Five Hundredth Anniversary of this Church is to-day in the hands of the little children who are moulding better than they know."

(*The Pastor*) "I cannot refrain from expressing my thanks again, and my thanks personally as well as the thanks of the Consistory and Church, to all these brethren who have spoken to us to-night.

There was one matter that was forgotten in our program, which comes to us very strongly now, and I ask you to rise and sing in conclusion two verses of "America—My Country, 'tis of Thee." Our fathers have left us this land. Let us lift our voices in thanksgiving."

“AMERICA.”

FEMALE QUARTETTE—“Come unto Me”.....*Hamar*
Misses Irene Storm, Alida Storm, Alice Strong, Estelle Sommer.

TRIO (Organ and Violins)—“Simple Aveu”.....*Thome*

HYMN (683)—“Blest be the Tie”.....

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ORGAN POSTLUDE—“Processional March”.....*Ketelby*

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